

PEACE OFFICER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION: BEST PRACTICES

CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING
JULY 2001

The mission of the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training is to continually enhance the professionalism of California law enforcement in serving its communities

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Peace Officer Recruitment: Best Practices and New Directions
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Recruiting and retaining peace officers throughout the state have become serious challenges for many law enforcement agencies. Compounding these challenges are the consequences of improvements in retirement plans for many peace officers, leading to a real and potential loss of experience and expertise in the field. The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, in recognition of the seriousness of this issue, has devoted staff resources to identify ways it can assist agencies with the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel.

During the past year, POST assembled and involved many people from the law enforcement community in a committee to participate in the design, development and presentation of information addressing concerns related to law enforcement recruitment and retention. This publication represents some of that very important work. With the assistance of experts in a variety of fields, the committee developed materials that were constructed to be integrated parts of an entire examination of current and potential practices in the field of recruitment and retention.

The material contained in this document reflects a comprehensive examination of the alternatives available to law enforcement agencies, cities and counties and officials who make critical decisions related to ensuring public safety in their communities. Representing some of the best thinking in recruitment and retention today, this material is intended for use by those persons responsible for planning and implementing recruitment and retention strategies, and to stimulate discussion about the issues that need to be considered to meet local needs.

It is evident from the work that went into this project that there are no easy solutions. There is no "one size fits all" approach that can take the place of hard work, committed leaders and people with a passion for making things happen. It is the hope of the Commission that this material will be a benchmark from which the law enforcement community will be able to experiment, develop additional alternatives, and learn from the experience of these practices in the *real world*.

Acknowledgements

This publication is the result of the work of a group of law enforcement professionals from throughout California, whose subject-matter expertise and hard work is reflected in this publication as well as in the July 2001 symposium on the challenges of recruitment to the law enforcement profession.

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Table of Contents

Notice of Copyright	ii	Offering Recruitment Incentives	36
Commissioners	iii	Analysis and Budget Preparation	37
Foreword	v	Alternative Funding Sources.....	39
Acknowledgements	vii	COPS Grants for Personnel and Equipment.....	41
Table of Contents	ix	Corporate and Foundation Sponsorship	43
How to read this publication	xi	Section Three: Marketing and	
Introduction.....	xiii	Use of Technology	45
Section One: Developing a Recruitment Team..1		Identifying Target Audiences.....	47
Facilitating the Recruitment Process	3	Job Fairs and Special Events.....	49
Selecting Your Agency Recruiter	5	College Campus Recruiting	51
Use of the Public Information Officer (PIO).....	7	Promotional Materials	53
Partnering with the Military	9	Mass Media and Regional Campaigns	55
Partnering with Academic Institutions	11	Budgetary and agency constraints may hamper effectiveness of campaign.	55
Inter-Agency Referral Processes	13	Junior Academies.....	56
Conduct Regional Testing/Agency Cooperation.....	15	Citizen Academies	57
State Recruiters' Association Participation	17	Sponsoring Youth Activities	59
Section Two: Budgeting and		Use of the Public Information Officer (PIO).....	61
Long Term Planning	18	Candidate Processing.....	63
Identifying Attrition Trends	20	Use of Technology for Marketing	64
Creating the Future Recruiting Pool	21	Agency Websites for Recruitment.....	66
Assessing Your Success/Evaluation Processes	23	Utilizing the POST Website for Recruitment	68
Expedited Testing.....	25	Developing a Candidate Database	69
Review of Sound Hiring Practices	27	E-mail to Facilitate Recruitment	71
Governor's Award for Recruitment	28	Voice Mail to Facilitate Recruitment	73
Out of State Recruitment and Background Investigations	29	Supporting Mentoring Programs	75
Research and Data Analysis	30	Section Four: Alternative Staffing	
General Budgetary Considerations	32	and Employee Preparation.....	77
Recruitment and Travel Expenses	33	Police Cadets.....	79
Promotional and Media Materials	35	Reserve Officers.....	80
		Volunteers	81

Table of Contents (continued)

Non-Sworn Employees	83	On-Site Dry Cleaning Services	136
Retired Officers	85	Establishing Sleeping Facilities	137
Military Personnel	87	Employee Empowerment	139
Non-Affiliated Academies.....	88	Take Home Cars/Commute Incentives.....	141
Non-Sworn Employees	89	Childcare Programs	143
Police Cadet Programs	91	Career Ladders	145
Explorer Scout Programs	93	Reciprocity of Retirement Systems	147
Reserve Officers.....	95	Physical Fitness Programs	148
Volunteers	97	Recognition and Rewards	150
Interns/Student Workers.....	99	Recognition and Rewards	150
Police Corps Programs	101	Forming Retention Task Forces	152
Magnet Schools.....	103		
Junior Academies.....	105		
Testing Orientation Programs	107		
Pre-Academy Programs	109		
Post-Academy Orientation	111		
Mentoring Programs	113		
Section Five: Attracting and Retaining Staff	115		
Mentoring Programs	117		
Overall Benefits Package	119		
Longevity Pay	121		
Relocation Assistance.....	123		
Student Loan Forgiveness	125		
Signing Bonuses	126		
Bilingual Pay	127		
Diversity of Work	128		
Alternative Work Schedules	130		
Job Sharing/Part Time Employment.....	132		
Educational Incentives	134		

How to read this publication

This publication is intended for:

- Policy makers, including mayors, city council members, county supervisors
- Senior managers concerned with law enforcement, including city managers, police chiefs, county sheriffs, directors of human resources departments
- Law enforcement professionals involved with recruitment, including new and experienced agency recruiters

Intended Use

This publication, *Peace Officer Recruitment and Retention: Best Practices*, was produced by a POST committee that met over the course of one year. The committee, composed of experienced and innovative law enforcement professionals with significant subject matter expertise in the field of recruitment, researched and compiled a set of current best practices and suggested future directions to enlarge the statewide recruitment pool. This is the product of the committee's work.

The publication can be used in three ways:

- 1) as a guide for policy development to help agencies overcome projected labor shortages;
- 2) as an orientation for agency managers and departments affected by peace officer shortages; and
- 3) as an orientation to train new agency recruiters.

Later this year, a more detailed version of this publication will be available from POST on CD-ROM. How you proceed through the

material depends on your intended use. In this section, we offer some suggestions.

Policy makers will likely use this printed version as their basic reference. Accompanying the executive summary is a table that lists the key elements of each best practice in a standard format that you'll find throughout the manual. This format allows you to compare issues such as the relative strengths and weaknesses of each practice.

The publication has been divided into five sections, each of which has an introduction. We strongly recommend that you read the introduction first, even if you plan to only pick a few practices to examine. These introductions provide not only an overview of the section, but also allow you to understand how individual best practices fit within an integrated recruiting strategy.

Some of the programs we describe are not currently in practice within the law enforcement community. At times, we borrowed ideas from private industry and translated them to the law enforcement profession. In all cases, whether currently in practice or not, they are referred to as a "Best Practice." We always intend for you to take these ideas and adapt them in ways that fit your department, your agency, and your community.

You may want to investigate a particular best practice further. For this purpose, background information on any of the best practices will be supplied later this year on the CD-ROM version, viewable on any PC or Macintosh computer. You can also check the POST website (<http://www.post.ca.gov>). The background information will consist of

How to Read This Publication (continued)

- 1) a detailed narrative that will step you through the implementation of a given best practice;
- 2) relevant research and background articles; and
- 3) a video of selected best practices, viewable on most PCs and Macintoshes.

Those professionals who carry out the work of agency recruitment will want to thoroughly read this manual, because it will provide clear narratives on how to set up each of the specific programs mentioned. The detailed narrative description of the best practice, supplied only on CD-ROM, is intended to provide new

agency recruiters with a thorough grounding in recruitment practices and may be used as a supplement to classroom training programs. We also recommend it for human resources professionals who are looking for new ways to assist law enforcement divisions.

The law enforcement profession always faces the challenge of renewing its ranks. For nearly every agency, this is an on-going effort. However, for some time, finding qualified applicants who have the desire and ability to meet the selection process and academy training requirements has become a more challenging proposition.

Other factors, too numerous to list, have played into a growing shortage of law enforcement officers nationwide. Agencies struggle to cope with this national problem using only local resources. In California, the adoption by local agencies of more favorable pension terms (3% at age 50) will create more vacancies that need to be filled.

As a result of the input received from a variety of sources, including many police chiefs and sheriffs, the Commission directed POST staff to assess the issues posed to law enforcement agencies statewide. As a result, POST engaged in a contract with a Special Consultant through the Management Fellowship Program to expand its research of the issue further beginning in June 2000.

Upon her selection to manage the POST Recruitment Project, Vallejo Police Department Sergeant Lori Lee conducted a comprehensive literature review in an attempt to assess the scope of the recruitment problem. This review ranged from current law enforcement publications, private industry sources, California labor statistics, psychology and human resources research, studies by academic institutions, and contemporary programs in

place in law enforcement agencies across the State.

Through this process, common recruitment and retention trends became more apparent. As a result, addressing the shortage of qualified applicants was one key trend that became the impetus for moving forward. Subject matter experts – representing a cross section of local agencies, law enforcement associations, and consultants from private sector companies – were identified to participate with a POST-sponsored committee.

The committee was charged with developing a set of recommended practices in law enforcement recruitment. It then turned its attention to disseminating the results of months of research and assessment. The result was several projects to ensure that the practices described in these pages would be read, studied, and, hopefully, adapted to the needs of local agencies. These projects included:

- 1) a brief video providing an overview of the profession to potential applicants;
- 2) a group of Public Service Announcements for use by recruiters in cooperation with television stations across the state;
- 3) two hours of video case studies of best practices in law enforcement recruitment;
- 4) this "At A Glance" Executive Summary print publication offering an overview of best practices and new directions for law enforcement recruitment;

- 5) a CD-ROM containing this publication and an expanded version, complete with step-by-step instructions to implementing recommended practices; and
- 6) a Statewide Recruitment Symposium presenting best practices.

This publication is an attempt to offer to local, county, and state agencies a vision of sharing resources to face these combined challenges. It

provides examples and ideas that will make recruitment efforts more effective and the law enforcement profession more appealing to potential applicants. In the pages that follow, there is a summary of the results of the committee's hard work. It is hoped that these tools will spur your own innovations in law enforcement recruitment.

SECTION ONE:

Developing a Recruitment Team

In this section, we suggest effective ways of allocating agency personnel to manage the recruitment process from marketing to hiring. Sometimes these are agency-dedicated personnel, but often there are others – in Human Resources departments, in the military, or on college campuses – who form the partnership necessary for effective recruitment efforts. In these best practices, we also highlight the importance of assigning dedicated personnel to recruitment, who can provide focus to a department's efforts.

To assist you in developing dedicated personnel, this section addresses the kinds of skills and qualifications that will make an agency recruiter successful. When the economy is strong, as it was during the 1990s, competition with the private sector for applicants becomes more intense and the recruitment of candidates into the law enforcement profession more difficult. Developing a recruitment team with the necessary skill becomes even more necessary to attract applicants.

Agency administrators can take many of the initial steps necessary to develop or enhance recruitment strategies. In particular, administrators may want to read *Facilitating the Recruitment Process*, *Selecting Your Agency Recruiter*, and *Use of the Public Information Officer* in this section.

For some agencies, it may be necessary to extend beyond the immediate resources available within the organization and establish partnerships to enhance recruitment. Traditionally, relationships with the military and nearby academic institutions to attract law enforcement candidates have yielded significant results. This section provides best practices in developing such projects.

This section also highlights the growing trend toward agency cooperation in the best practice, *Conduct Regional Testing/Agency Cooperation*. A new direction in agency cooperation is the recent establishment of the Law Enforcement Recruitment Association of California (LERAC), as described in *State Recruiters' Association Participation*. LERAC will distribute related training and networking among those involved in recruitment, testing and selection processes, or who have final hiring authority for law enforcement professionals.

Facilitating the Recruitment Process



Executive Summary

The Chief/Sheriff of a law enforcement agency sets standards for what is important to his or her organization. As a result, when recruitment and retention are important to the agency executive, they are attended to by the organization. Well-organized recruitment processes provide numerous benefits. Applicants can see when an agency is professional because the selection process is well organized, timely and communicates interest in the potential employee. Candidates talk to one another about their experiences, and where the hiring process is positive an agency's image is enhanced.

Selecting the best possible recruiters also demonstrates the value an agency places on recruiting.

However, the agency must ensure that adequate resources and support necessary to recruitment efforts are provided. It is also important to assist recruiters in their responsibilities, as well as to utilize other agency employees who are interested in supporting specific recruitment activities. Executive and management support is the key to all of these considerations and to an effective recruitment process overall

Objective

To provide resources and improve processes that facilitate the recruitment effort.

Strengths

Affixes the responsibility for recruiting and hiring qualified personnel on the Chief/Sheriff and the executive staff.

Weaknesses

N/A

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program:

The chief/sheriff should consistently stress the priority of recruitment throughout the organization. All employees should be responsible for the recruitment effort. Any specialist(s) assigned to this function should ensure programs include other elements of the agency. The budget must be adequate to accomplish the stated goals.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies must be creative in finding funding sources and resources (e.g., grants, engaging in cooperative ventures with other agencies, and seeking marketing assistance).

Regional Considerations

All agencies can benefit by examining their recruitment and selection programs and processes to identify areas that may be improved. Small agencies may improve their initial screening process through the use of regional testing.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Statewide recruitment associations facilitate sharing of information and materials.

Related Practices See

Selecting Your Agency Recruiter, Governor's Recruitment Award, Participation in State Recruitment Association, Regional & Consolidated Testing.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary widely depending on the scope of the recruitment efforts and methods used.



Selecting Your Agency Recruiter

Executive Summary

Law enforcement recruitment is a vital function, yet many agencies staff the position without considering the impact to the community, the organization, or the law enforcement profession. The recruiter must be a model of the type of officer the agency hopes to attract.

Law enforcement agencies should establish a set of positive selection criteria for recruitment positions. These criteria might include:

- Reflects the diversity of the community
- Models community service

- Understands the organization's structure, culture, and policing style

The recruiter must be capable of engaging applicants in conversation to gather the information needed to make informed decisions. Because the recruiter must match the goals of potential applicants to the organization's needs, he or she must be able to assess the applicant's commitment to the agency. By creating clear, positive criteria for recruiter selection, agencies will increase recruitment rates and retention and reduce replacement costs.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To select personnel best suited to meet agency recruitment goals.

Strengths

Competent, energetic recruiters have the potential to greatly increase the success of recruitment programs.

Weaknesses

Agencies may not have the resources to assign a full-time recruiter or may not be able to select the most qualified recruiter.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify resources, including financial support; establish chain-of-command; ensure flexibility of schedules and operations; establish a suitable work area; obtain support staff; alert department staff and emphasize support; monitor the program.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller departments may consider contracting with a marketing specialist or firm, assigning an employee part-time, or forming a consortium to share resources with other agencies in the area.

Regional Considerations

Are there colleges or military bases in the area? Is the unemployment rate high or low? What is the area's cost of living? Is a regional consortium feasible? Is out-of-area testing an option?

Experience/Resource Agencies

Marketing consultants; other agencies with established recruiting programs.

Related Practices

See: Facilitating the Recruitment Process

Associated Costs/Budget

Increased costs include recruiter salary/benefits and support staff for the recruitment process.

Use of the Public Information Officer (PIO)

Executive Summary

A public information officer can have a significant impact on an agency’s recruitment effort. Properly supported through training, introduction to marketing methods and recruitment strategies, the PIO can be made a cost-effective element of the agency recruiting team. With training in how to develop media sources beyond the contracts initiated by the press, the PIO can leverage opportunities for getting agency needs more widely communicated to the community.

A PIO knowledgeable of the work of recruiters can seize opportunities to expand human-interest stories to explain agency needs, goals, and events that further recruitment. The PIO can assist the human resources (HR) entity in stretching its advertising budget related to

peace officer recruitment and hiring campaigns. This can increase cooperation and coordination among the law enforcement entity and the HR.

Use of a PIO provides opportunity for balanced reporting of policing that enhances the image of law enforcement. For example, stories on local programs, DARE, Sober Graduation, Search and Rescue Teams, special task forces, and mutual aid are excellent opportunities for furthering the recruitment effort. People are more inclined to have interest in law enforcement and be able to influence others who are considering job opportunities when they read or hear about interesting, positive stories concerning the profession.

Objective

To use the public information function of the local agency to enhance recruiting efforts.

Strengths

Positively influences public opinion, enhances public image of the profession and spurs recruiting.

Weaknesses

N/A

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Select Public Information Officer and define responsibilities; identify the sources that can be useful in providing information to the public; develop policy; directly involve the PIO with the recruiter(s); encourage members of the agency to notify the PIO of human-interest items and other matters of interest to the community.

Variables/ Alterations for Department Size

When resources are limited, all members of the agency are potentially PIOs. However, at least one person should have the primary responsibility for coordinating the release of information.

Regional Considerations

Agencies within a common recruiting area might benefit from joint efforts.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies have a PIO: LAPD and Contra Costa County Sheriff’s Department.

Related Practices

See: Marketing Best Practices

Associated Costs/Budget

If the position is new, there are salary, benefits, training and advertising costs; however, there is minimal cost beyond funding the position(s).



Partnering with the Military

Executive Summary

Most branches of the military have experienced peaks and valleys related to recruitment and retention cycles. Many of the recruiting practices the military has engaged in are based on significant research, marketing and use of technology recommended by professionals. Law enforcement is generally seeking potential employees from the same candidate pool that the military recruits from. The military, however, has considerably more resources to apply to its efforts. Therefore, developing a partner-

ship with the military can increase the effectiveness of an agency's recruitment effort, allowing agency recruiter(s) to experience significant training, networking and technological improvements.

Many branches of the military are willing and able to team with local law enforcement to share training concepts and provide direction and, in some cases, provide support in the operations of law enforcement recruiting.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To enhance local recruitment efforts through partnerships with the military.

Strengths

Provides strategies that have been successful for the various branches of the military for agency consideration.

Weaknesses

May involve significant additional resources; requires employee time to network with military recruitment personnel.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Evaluate military recruitment practices to determine organizational potential; determine level of support required with participating military organizations; identify resource requirements and budgetary needs.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Larger agencies may consider establishing partnerships with several branches of the military. Smaller agencies may choose to establish a regional group composed of other local agencies to share the connection to military recruitment personnel.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles Police Department, San Diego Police Department.

Related Practices

See: Creating Future Recruitment Pools

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the extent of commitment to the partnership and the exposure an agency is seeking.

Partnering with Academic Institutions



Executive Summary

The law enforcement profession is diverse and complex. As a result, a strong academic background and continued post-secondary education have become increasingly important. Colleges and universities can provide valuable resources to facilitate employee growth within the agency as well as identify potential candidates for future agency needs. Agencies should recognize this value and provide support to potential law enforcement candidates and employees who seek opportunity for self-improvement.

Partnerships with academic institutions can be valuable to an agency in many ways beyond its recruitment needs. For example, agencies that tangibly support education for their employees by partnering with these institutions may enjoy additional respect from the public.

Objective

To develop successful partnerships with colleges and universities.

Strengths

Seeks to increase the number of college-educated employees; candidates can be introduced to an agency and the selection process at an early stage of their educational pursuit; provides current officers incentives and opportunity for further education and development.

Weaknesses

Competition may be high for these potential candidates; viability of candidates cannot be initially determined.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify the scope of agency involvement; determine personnel needs and cost to agency; select academic institutions; determine the means to reach and select students; assess incentives for employees who pursue additional education.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies may join with other agencies to organize and implement successful partnerships.

Regional Considerations

Rural agencies will likely have fewer local academic institutions. They may need to extend the partnership to urban academic institutions, or promote distance-learning opportunities.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Examine best practices of other agencies.

Related Practices

See: Agency Websites for Recruitment and Utilizing the POST Website for Recruitment.

Associated Costs/Budget

Staffing costs; promotional materials; travel expenses; exhibit/display boards; cost of employee incentives.

Inter-Agency Referral Processes

Executive Summary

Minimum hiring qualifications can differ among law enforcement agencies. Applicants interested in a law enforcement career may need guidance in making informed decisions about their best agency fit. Recruiters armed with this information are able to assess the applicant's interests, objectives and qualifications. Where the recruiter determines the fit for his or her employer is right, the applicant is pursued for employment with the agency. In situations where the recruiter determines the applicant's interests and qualifications are better suited for another agency, the applicant can be referred.

Recruiters with the ability to easily provide information and refer applicants to another

agency would benefit both the applicant and the law enforcement community. Development of a list of hiring qualifications would enhance the ability of agencies to refer applicants to potential employers. Posting the list on the Internet would also allow easy access for both applicants and recruiters. The expense individual agencies would incur would be minimal, and the return on investment could be significant. Using the POST Website and working with the newly formed Law Enforcement Recruitment Association of California could assist in accomplishing this objective.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To develop an applicant referral system among California law enforcement agencies.

Strengths

After identifying applicant interests and goals, helps recruiter guide candidates in identifying agency opportunities; agency retains applicants who are identified as meeting agency needs; helps recruiters to refer applicants to other agencies.

Weaknesses

N/A

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify recruitment information about other California law enforcement agencies; compile data by region and disseminate to other agency recruiters (possibly through Recruitment Association); use POST Website to obtain information (i.e., Peace Officer Employment Data and links to other agencies).

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

Usually easier to work collaboratively and network with local agencies to learn their needs and recruiting objectives.

Experience/Resource Agencies

The CHP has begun to develop a list of contact information for agencies that are currently hiring.

Related Practices

See: State Recruiters' Association Participation; Conduct Regional Testing/Agency Cooperation; Facilitating the Recruitment Process.

Associated Costs/Budget

Minimal costs are involved to obtain and disseminate information.

Conduct Regional Testing/Agency Cooperation



Executive Summary

Although there is admittedly strong competition among law enforcement agencies for qualified applicants, the predominant reason for the current limited applicant pool is the competitive labor environment created by private sector salaries and employment opportunities. In order to attract and retain qualified applicants, law enforcement must become more accommodating and user-friendly in its hiring process.

Once marketing efforts attract qualified applicants to a career in law enforcement, agencies need a method to efficiently move potential officers through the testing process. A collaborative effort to eliminate redundant testing combined with a shared database of pertinent information has the potential to keep qualified candidates from moving into other career fields with less daunting hiring processes.

Objective

To create regional applicant testing and a regional database of tested applicants.

Strengths

Prevents loss of applicants due to lengthy testing/hiring process; POST standardized tests provide validation needed by human resources agencies; one-stop testing for agencies and applicants; reduces individual agency costs.

Weaknesses

Lack of agency specificity in the application process; reduced number of test dates and sites; difficulty identifying equitable cost sharing for the testing process; agencies quicker in processing candidates are generally quicker in making a job offer.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop a testing process; develop a proctoring team; obtain agreement (MOA) from law enforcement agencies regionally to accept standard POST testing process; develop a statewide applicant database supported by POST.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Large agencies with higher recruitment demands may choose to augment the regional testing process. Smaller agencies can increase access to more applicants through participation in consolidated testing.

Regional Considerations

Test dates by region and within a region may need to be rotated. Regional agencies must agree on common entry-level testing instruments.

Experience/Resource Agencies

South Bay Regional Training Center, Foster City Police Department, and Contra Costa County have implemented some form of regional testing.

Related Practices

See: Marketing and Use of Technology

Associated Costs/Budget

Potential personnel cost savings through use of regional proctoring. Testing costs could potentially be shared with local college-based academy presenters resulting in further savings.

State Recruiters' Association Participation

Executive Summary

Traditionally, recruiters and recruitment personnel have shared ideas and best practices at informal seminars or by telephone and e-mail. Participation in a formal recruitment association allows for a more efficient means of sharing information to promote the selection and

hiring of quality law enforcement employees. It also promotes opportunities for sharing resources where practical and for performing recruitment activities on a larger scale.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To encourage participation in a recruitment association.

Strengths

Promotes the creative development and exchange of recruitment practices; provides training opportunities for recruitment personnel and government officials.

Weaknesses

Detracts from the primary assignment; requires time and financial commitment.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program:

Identify a suitable association; secure funding; complete the application process.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

The number of participants may vary by agency size and need.

Regional Considerations

Travel may be necessary to attend meetings and training.

Experience/Resource Agencies

N/A

Related Practices

See: Attracting and Retaining Staff.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs could be significant depending on agency size and extent of participation. Potential costs include membership dues, conference registration, travel expenses, and implementation of practices learned by participants.

SECTION TWO:

Budgeting and Long Term Planning

Many agencies need an immediate response to the difficulties in law enforcement recruitment. However, the best way to ensure that critical shortages do not occur is for every agency to anticipate its needs and plan for the future. During the research for this project, we discovered many departments are unable to provide an "in the moment snapshot" of vacancy rates, as explained in *Identifying Attrition Trends*.

Agency staff responsible for the hiring, selection, and training of potential employees can be much better prepared to accurately anticipate their resource and budgetary needs by having statistical data available. These data statistics include the number of personnel leaving the agency annually, unanticipated resignations, and the failure rate for academy training and probation.

Identifying attrition trends within an organization is only one consideration for the future. It is just as important to evaluate current hiring and selection processes. Examples of this include reviewing the current practices from a legal perspective and identifying where testing procedures might be streamlined or expedited to process candidates more efficiently.

With this section, best practices in long-term planning and budgeting are presented for con-

sideration. Adapted to your own agency objectives, they can provide an outline for future planning processes. Because budgeting is so important to your success, this section contains general guidelines for estimating likely costs related to the recruitment, marketing, and selection processes.

This section concludes with suggestions for those who may need to supplement their budget to achieve recruitment goals, in the best practices entitled *Alternative Funding Sources and Corporate and Foundation Sponsorship*.

Identifying Attrition Trends



Executive Summary

Traditional assumptions about why personnel resign may be inaccurate. By identifying attrition trends, agencies can remove factors known to cause employees to leave. Increased employee retention results in lower recruitment costs.

Objective

To identify attrition trends in order to anticipate future recruitment and testing needs.

Strengths

Allows the agency to identify conditions that contribute to higher attrition rates; allows creation of a more attractive working environment; allows the agency to plan for staffing needs.

Weaknesses

In some cases, may require developing cooperative working relationships that have not previously existed.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify trends; establish networks with public agencies that maintain population, development, and demographic information; join statewide/regional recruiting associations; assess city/county management of the recruiting, selection, and hiring processes; establish budget.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

The less involved the agency has been in the recruitment process, the more effort will be needed to identify and forecast attrition trends.

Regional Considerations

Each agency must consider the regional geographic, demographic, and economic issues that impact peace officer recruitment (e.g., housing, transportation, entertainment, and leisure activities).

Experience/Resource Agencies

Recruitment associations.

Related Practices

See: Creating the Future Recruiting Pool and Attracting and Retaining Staff.

Associated Costs/Budget

Participation in professional development activities; necessary technical training.

Creating the Future Recruiting Pool

Executive Summary

Developing and supporting youth-related activities has a long, positive history for law enforcement. These activities promote good citizenship and provide the opportunity to inspire local young people to consider a law enforcement career. Volunteers who work with law enforcement provide direct support and serve as emissaries to the community. This also creates opportunities for them to provide positive impetus to potential law enforcement candidates.

In addition, most agencies acknowledge the value of a workforce that mirrors the community that is served. With the recent increases in ethnically diverse populations throughout the state, many agencies have seen concurrent increases in the diversity of the communities they serve. These agencies often have difficulty reaching out to these emerging communities to address their needs. One way of responding

to this issue is to plan for the future by "growing your own" potential candidate reservoir.

In order to be successful in breaking down barriers between law enforcement and emerging communities, agencies should reach out to the youth of these communities. This often has a dramatic effect. Providing youth programs can create positive experiences for young people in relating to law enforcement, and may inspire participants to consider the possibility of a law enforcement career. Youth programs such as law enforcement explorer scouts, athletic leagues, and cadet programs have been sources from which law enforcement officers have been drawn. Reserve officer programs have also enjoyed success as a means for recruiting and hiring full-time law enforcement officers. However, agencies should recognize that these are long-term commitments that can take years to reap the first recruit.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To enhance local recruitment efforts using youth and citizen volunteer programs.

Strengths

Agencies can assess the skills and interests of particular individuals; youth programs offer constructive opportunities for young people and gains them exposure to law enforcement; volunteer based programs develop positive relationships.

Weaknesses

Resource demand can be significant; there is no guarantee that participants will pursue a career in law enforcement; volunteers need to feel value in the time they commit to a program

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Define program(s) objectives; determine resource requirements; identify funding needs; develop potential partnerships (e.g., local organizations, schools, colleges) develop training required for the participants; determine appropriate oversight and coordination responsibilities; identify location(s) where activities will

be performed; address potential legal issues (e.g., hold harmless and other contracts and agreements).

Variables/ Alterations for Department Size

Larger agencies should consider establishing partnerships with local youth agencies; youth volunteer programs may be a valuable resource for smaller agencies, but creation of a youth academy may be labor-intensive and cost prohibitive.

Regional Considerations N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

A variety of programs are in effect; consult other agencies with established programs.

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees; Volunteers; Police Cadets; Magnet Schools; Interns/Student Workers; Explorer Scout Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the number of programs offered. Whenever possible, seek funding from community sources, such as the local Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, schools, and fundraisers.

Assessing Your Success/Evaluation Processes



Executive Summary

Along with the considerable challenges facing law enforcement agencies in attracting qualified applicants, there is the additional concern of finding the candidate who is "the perfect fit" for a particular community or jurisdiction. The success or failure of a recruitment program cannot be measured solely by the number of applicants hired by the agency. The process itself becomes meaningless unless the outcome is the hiring and retention of a motivated and productive employee who embraces the agency's philosophy of service delivery. Consequently, it is in the agency's best interest to develop measures by which to evaluate the

recruitment effort in terms of the demonstrated performance of the applicants hired.

An effective assessment process will allow an agency to seek candidates possessing the right combination of skills and attitudes. While training is quite proficient in teaching skill sets, there has been no demonstrated success in teaching attitude. A focus on assessment will serve to reduce the risk of a "mismatch" prior to an offer of employment and create an expectation that the candidate is "the right fit" early in the process.

Objective

To identify criteria by which an agency may realistically evaluate the success of its recruitment program.

Strengths

Allows the agency to compare results with intended goals and objectives; identifies areas where the organization may choose to modify its recruitment strategies. Ultimately, the process should be of significant value in identifying the candidate most likely to fit agency needs.

Weaknesses

May be difficult to measure the "success" of a particular recruitment program in view of the multi-dimensional nature of the work; may be necessary to establish a very subjective standard to determine the tenure required for a new employee to be considered successful. Measurements of success will vary widely among different agencies.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop specific recruitment goals and objectives reflective of agency personnel needs; develop a profile of the successful officer, characterized by desirable performance standards, and applicable to specific career milestones.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Any evaluation of a recruitment program will by necessity be highly individualized and patterned to agency needs and resources.

Regional Considerations

Not applicable unless agencies in a particular region share common recruitment strategies and personnel needs.

Experience/Resource Agencies

No extensive research data available. May be desirable to collaborate with agencies of similar size serving communities with similar demographic data, community needs and crime patterns. Partnerships with local educational institutions may also be of benefit.

Related Practices

N/A

Associated Costs/Budget

Usually nominal. Largest investment will likely be staff resources for the development of the evaluation criteria, with additional costs possible if an outside consultant is employed.



Expedited Testing

Executive Summary

In a competitive job market, law enforcement agencies with streamlined testing and hiring processes can more quickly make job offers to applicants. This provides agencies with an opportunity to attract and retain highly qualified candidates throughout the examination process. The expedited testing process also

provides the administering law enforcement agency with an opportunity to meet its hiring goals in a more timely fashion.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To establish guidelines for streamlining the testing process for peace officers to enable agencies to regularly and quickly test candidates.

Strengths

Expedites testing of candidates; improves an agency's ability to address immediate personnel needs; provides flexibility by allowing testing of candidates anytime; reduces loss of candidates to other agencies with quicker testing and turnaround time for results; enables agencies to accommodate out of state participants.

Weaknesses

Requires cooperation with other city/county entities, will impact staffing and increase costs related to frequent testing.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Assess the need and value of an expedited selection testing process; working with the Human Resources entity, develop an expedited selection testing process; determine administration responsibilities and related logistical issues; develop budget plan to address the increased testing.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

An expedited testing process can benefit agencies of any size. Logistics of the testing process and the number of candidates will vary depending on the size of the agency, but the overall concept remains the same.

Regional Considerations

Smaller agencies may find benefit in working collaboratively with neighboring agencies. Though there may be competition for shared candidates, it is the sharing of costs and resources that may promote economy without significant loss of candidates for any participant.

Experience/Resource Agencies

The California Highway Patrol conducts a consolidated testing process over a two-day period. The Fremont Police Department conducts "fast-track" testing that enables an examination to be administered at any time.

Related Practices

See: Conduct Regional Testing/Agency Cooperation.

Associated Costs/Budget

Increased costs related to administering more frequent tests.

Review of Sound Hiring Practices

Executive Summary

There are numerous legal issues involved in the selection and hiring of new officers. Agencies must continuously ensure that employees involved in the process receive training about the legal implications of their duties and responsibilities. They must have

access to an agency legal advisor when they encounter issues that require timely advice. Every effort should be made to work collaboratively with the agency human resources entity to minimize possible areas of liability.

Objective

To comply with the legal requirements associated with hiring practices.

Strengths

Avoids civil liability related to failures to meet the legal requirements of hiring employees; promotes understanding between the agency and its human resources entity; keeps employees involved in the process apprised of changes in hiring practices and applicable laws.

Weaknesses

Sometimes complicated; involves the need for training; may require communication with an agency legal advisor.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program:

Gather applicable laws and regulations; identify areas of potential liability; provide training to new supervisors and recruiting staff; disseminate information bulletins.

Variables/ Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Agency legal counsel; contact agencies that have conducted such reviews.

Related Practices

N/A

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs associated with legal review, legal updates and training.

Governor's Award for Recruitment

Executive Summary

Effective recruiting is critical to law enforcement and its need to ensure public confidence. However, attracting individuals to the profession and selecting the most qualified candidates is a growing challenge for many law enforcement organizations.

As a result of current recruitment difficulties, it is necessary to become more creative and forward thinking in the area of personnel recruit-

ment. The conception of the State Governor's Award is a result of efforts to support significant recruiting accomplishments. The award should be used to recognize significant efforts in law enforcement recruiting in the State of California.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To create an award to encourage professionalism in law enforcement recruiting.

Strengths

Promotes attention to and formal leadership of the effort to increase the pool of law enforcement candidates; encourages the further development of professionalism in law enforcement.

Weaknesses

The effort of smaller agencies may be less visible in the effort to improve recruitment.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Through the POST Commission's Advisory Committee, draft specific background, purpose statements, and criteria for nomination; consider use of state resolutions and/or proclamations; set up the Law Enforcement Recruitment Association of California (LERAC) as a recommending body.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Include all California law enforcement and related agencies (i.e., specialized, academies).

Regional Considerations

Smaller agencies may be less visible as nominees; however, LERAC participation should minimize this risk.

Experience/Resource Agencies

POST Commission Governor's Award criteria; LERAC

Related Practices

See: Facilitating the Recruitment Process; State Recruiters' Association Participation.

Associated Costs/Budget

Minimal; staff time to prepare application and recommendation report.

Out of State Recruitment and Background Investigations



Executive Summary

California law enforcement has long enjoyed a reputation for being progressive and innovative. However, economic prosperity and significant events in recent years have led to a reduction in the pool of qualified law enforcement applicants. One way to increase the pool of qualified candidates is to broaden the search by recruiting candidates from out of state. In

order to implement this strategy, agencies need to be prepared to travel out of state to perform recruitment activities and conduct background investigations. Planning for this approach requires budgetary support.

Objective

To budget sufficient funds to recruit and conduct background investigations out of state.

Strengths

Potentially increases the pool of qualified applicants; may contribute fresh ideas for local implementation and increased diversity to law enforcement agencies; provides assurance of thorough background investigations.

Weaknesses

Requires additional time, travel and money for recruiting and background investigation trips; the per capita cost of recruiting and investigating is significantly greater.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify areas that would most likely yield qualified candidates; identify the desired method of recruiting out of state (publications, travel to events, etc.); determine costs of recruiting and conducting background investigations out of state.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

The need to recruit out of state is influenced by agency size, availability of desirable candidates, and sufficiency of funds for these activities.

Regional Considerations

Agencies may consider forming partnerships to reduce the cost of out of state recruitment.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Los Angeles Police Department and Santa Rosa Police Department have done out of state recruiting.

Related Practices

See: Identifying Attrition Trends, Promotional and Media Materials, Recruitment and Travel Expenses.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary greatly depending on size of agency, hiring trends, and frequency of out of state travel.

Research and Data Analysis

Executive Summary

Employment trend information suggests that the current recruiting dilemma will be with law enforcement for some time. Fewer candidates in the employment pool, competition from private industry and technology for skilled employees, and the reported implications of Generation "X" and "Y" workers will continue to be challenges. As a result, the profession must be prepared to make permanent changes

to the way it does business and must be on the cutting edge in the study of the target pool of employees and the "selling" of the profession. In sum, law enforcement personnel must develop the capabilities of research scientists and sociologists in anticipating trends as opposed to reacting to them.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To use marketing and data collection techniques that provides long term, continuous candidate demographics for marketing.

Strengths

Provides a consistent, scientific approach to the recruiting effort; defines needs and anticipates economic and demographic factors; puts agency officials in touch with the characteristics of the candidate pool; helps employee retention by identifying employee and candidate issues.

Weaknesses

Trends can be misinterpreted; over reliance on data surveys can obscure real issues; some factors cannot be anticipated; staff may not be skilled in analyzing workforce demographics.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop surveys; survey during the testing process to determine how candidates learned of the test, how they perceive the agency, and why they are applying for law enforcement; identify successful candidates and gather biographical information on their interests, values, and goals; conduct comprehensive exit interviews; subscribe to periodicals or services which provide future economic and employment predictions.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Analysis and projections will be just as valid for smaller agencies, but may be on a smaller scale.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies have developed survey methods and marketing research. Many governmental and business marketing periodicals are excellent sources for future trends.

Related Practices

See: Long Term Planning & Retention related Best Practices

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs for forms, surveys, and periodicals should be minimal.

General Budgetary Considerations



Executive Summary

Agencies should plan the means to promote stable, consistent hiring of employees. Patterns of attrition and other external influences should be evaluated, and examination of the costs related to recruitment, testing, background investigations and hiring should be calculated. An agency's human resources entity

can assist in development of a plan and coordination of the hiring effort. The results of this process can assist the agency in developing an annual plan that includes a budget covering elements of the recruitment plan that will yield the best return on investment.

Objective

To ensure consistent funding to meet hiring needs.

Strengths

Requires a plan to support the recruiting objectives of the agency and justify the budgetary needs; provides for consistency in the recruiting effort; reduces the need to draw from other budgetary sources to support recruiting

Weaknesses

During periods when recruiting requires less effort, there is temptation to reallocate these budgetary funds.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Project long-term hiring needs based on retirement patterns and agency growth; assess other hiring, attrition and retention issues; develop a budgetary plan that factors in associated costs of recruiting to meet agency-identified hiring objectives.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agency size is relative to the amount of budgetary support; the strength and type of local economy influences the availability of funds; small agencies with a relatively static economic base typically need to be creative to obtain alternative funding sources.

Regional Considerations

Regional competition for candidates may be stronger in some areas, but there are also potential collaborative opportunities with other agencies.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Agencies should collaborate with their human resources entity; consider participation in a regional or statewide recruitment association.

Related Practices

See: Identifying Attrition Trends; Recruitment and Travel Expenses.

Associated Costs/Budget

Increased costs include funding for travel, out of area background checks, and promotional campaigns.



Recruitment and Travel Expenses

Executive Summary

Agencies need to include in their long-term planning the funding necessary for recruiting, selection, hiring and retention. Efforts need to be made to conduct trend analyses for hiring needs and to project out recruiting, testing and

hiring costs based on those needs. Sufficient support staff and equipment also need to be included in the long-term budget.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To ensure funding for a dedicated recruitment and travel budget.

Strengths

Ensures that funding is available when needed; keeps agencies from a crisis response to hiring needs that can result in inconsistent and unsuccessful application of recruitment and hiring strategies.

Weaknesses

Requires effort to plan for the long term; requires educating policy makers of the need for spending during times of fiscal restraint.

Start-up Issues/ Steps to Initiate the Program

Project long-term hiring needs based on potential retirement, agency growth, grant funding, other attrition and retention issues; factor in associated costs of recruiting, selecting and hiring; produce justifications for the need.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Long term planning is essential for all agencies.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Seek out those with long-term planning and budgeting experience as well as expertise in trend analysis relative to population growth, demographics, and attrition and retention.

Related Practices

See: General Budgetary Considerations; Analysis and Budget Preparation.

Associated Costs/Budget

Will vary based on departmental need for media and advertising efforts and recruitment travel.

Promotional and Media Materials



Executive Summary

In recent years the strong economy, low unemployment rate, and availability of jobs have forced many law enforcement agencies to actively market positions. In most cases, the use of free public service announcements has proven unsuccessful in reaching a large

enough pool of candidates to address present and future needs. Consequently, agencies should consider budgeting for media, marketing, and promotional items to meet staffing demands.

Objective

To budget for sufficient media, advertising, and promotional materials to meet agency recruitment needs.

Strengths

Helps ensure sufficient funds are identified and set aside for consistent, long-term recruiting; long-term strategies may save money.

Weaknesses

Line item budgets for specific media, advertising, and promotional material may not provide flexibility to meet recruitment needs; short-term costs may seem excessive relative to short-term successes.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop a recruitment plan; develop a marketing plan based on focus groups and research; hire or obtain pro bono services of an advertising or marketing firm.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agencies that need to fill large numbers of vacancies may find this practice beneficial.

Regional Considerations

Outside resources may be more readily available near urban centers.

Experience/Resource Agencies

LAPD; LASD; CHP.

Related Practices

See: Marketing-related best practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Production costs for media (e.g. the cost of renting billboard space does not include the cost to create the design). Community volunteerism and/or corporate donations may offset some costs.



Offering Recruitment Incentives

Executive Summary

Law enforcement recruiting is a critical function in modern day policing and has become increasingly challenging in recent years. The use of incentives to encourage successful recruitment efforts, although not widely used in law enforcement, is not a new professional strategy. For example, corporations and the military have been successfully using incen-

tives to encourage recruiting for many years. Common incentives include "finders' fees," additional vacation days, use of a take-home vehicle, recruitment bonuses, gifts, awards, medals, etc. The types of incentives and funding sources are only limited by the imagination of the agency.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To provide incentives to encourage and support successful recruitment efforts.

Strengths

Encourages initiative and commitment to recruiting quality law enforcement candidates; enhances awareness of the importance of recruiting quality candidates.

Weaknesses

Collaborative efforts could be weakened; possibility of negative competition.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Draft specific "Background" and "Purpose" for incentives; determine criteria for award and process of distribution; ensure employees appreciate the spirit in which the program is intended.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

May vary depending on local resources.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

The Los Angeles Police Department provides \$200.00 "finders' fees" to city employees who recruit candidates that enter the academy. The California Highway Patrol provides additional days off for successful recruitment efforts.

Related Practices

See: Long Term Planning and Retention Best Practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Associated costs will vary depending on the incentive established. Some incentives require hard cost allocation; others are entirely soft costs.

Analysis and Budget Preparation

Executive Summary

The crisis in recent years in hiring and retaining law enforcement personnel has made it abundantly clear that it is important to monitor internal and external trends that impact the need for increased or decreased hiring.

Agencies must budget for funds to respond to those needs. While most agencies budget for the increase or decrease in positions, they often fail to respond to the concurrent need to increase or decrease recruiting, selecting and

training those employees. Consequently, the agency needs to be prepared to budget not just for the positions but for the process that fills those positions. In addition, to reduce crisis-producing fluctuations in hiring, agencies should analyze trends impacting those areas in order to smoothly and effectively respond. This will help maintain an appropriate candidate flow to meet agency needs.

Objective

To ensure that the agency recruitment and selection budget produces a candidate flow sufficient to fill vacancies as agency needs fluctuate.

Strengths

Guarantees that funding is available as agency needs change; reduces crisis response to peaks and valleys in hiring.

Weaknesses

Requires continuous analysis and monitoring of variables to maintain appropriate funding requests.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Establish systems to track and monitor attrition trends, agency growth need trends, future policing needs, impact of potential/actual legislation on hiring issues, political environment and economy, and unemployment trends.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Budget processes differ from agency to agency. Political climate and support by City/County politicians and leaders impacts the ability of agencies to obtain necessary funding. Agencies with larger fluctuations in attrition and vacancies from year to year may find this budgeting practice more useful.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Consult organizations with experience in budgeting, trend analysis, and lobbying for funding.

Related Practices

See: General Budget Considerations.

Associated Costs/Budget

Resources to conduct analyses; funding for personnel to develop tracking systems, maintain the information, conduct analyses and prepare budget needs assessment prior to budgeting process.

Alternative Funding Sources

Executive Summary

The funding requirements of law enforcement agencies, regardless of size, are challenging. Many successful practices developed by law enforcement began with a vision of improving the ability of employees to be effective; however, they were usually initiated without budgetary support. Programs to enhance the availability and use of crime data, improve response to community-based needs, and expand agency access to technology began outside of the budget process. Whether through public and private grants, service clubs, or community support groups and businesses, agencies found the financial support that was needed.

The ability of agencies to obtain alternative funding demonstrates a commitment to their employees to give them the tools they need to be effective. It also translates into valuing employees by responding to needs that make a difference in serving the community. This has implications for agency recruitment and retention through display of a supportive work environment

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To identify alternative funding sources to enhance the agency work environment.

Strengths

May increase community partnerships; encourages creativity in exploring public and private funding possibilities; may motivate the formation of new collaborative partnerships.

Weaknesses

Partnerships cannot be taken for granted once established; changes in direction or a partner's fiscal status can have an adverse effect on agency activities; completion of grant fund support may involve elimination of program(s); requires accountability and administrative controls.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop program objectives; examine potential sources appropriate for cultivating partnerships; assess the availability of public and private grants; seek community support.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Where grants are involved, larger agencies may have greater access to experienced grant writers.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies have implemented variations of this practice. Many state and federal grants require collaboration.

Related Practices

See: General Budgetary Considerations, Analysis and Budget Preparation.

Associated Costs/Budget

Cost will vary depending on resources committed.

COPS Grants for Personnel and Equipment

Executive Summary

Grant funding may be one way of obtaining additional money to offset the costs of hiring, training and equipping new law enforcement employees. At this time, there are numerous sources of grant funds from state, federal and other sources that can assist law enforcement in the recruiting and hiring of new personnel. Many of these grants require only a relatively short and simple application to obtain grant approval and funding.

Depending on the program, grants can provide substantial startup and long-term funding.

There are grant opportunities for sworn officers and deputies, civilian personnel, technology and equipment. For example, the federal Department of Justice offers a number of

Community Oriented Policing (COPS) grants. Depending on the grant, law enforcement agencies can hire officers and civilians or purchase equipment under any one of a number of these COPS grants. In addition, there are a number of state grants from specific groups or departments that will provide funding such as block grants or funds provided for specific issues or problems. It is relatively easy to explore the Internet and other sources of information to find out what grant funds are available and how to go about getting them.

Acceptance of a grant by an agency should be given careful consideration since most grants usually require that certain obligations be met by the accepting agency.

Objective

To identify and obtain supplemental funding to offset hiring and salary costs through the COPS Grant Program

Strengths

Supplements existing agency budget in the short term.

Weaknesses

Some grants require conditions that may not be suitable for agencies; requires additional reporting and documentation maintenance; it appears that the availability of COPS Grants may be diminishing.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Contact the Department of Justice and reference COPS Grants. They will provide examples and outlines of the application process.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Contact agencies currently participating in COPS grants (numerous across the State).

Related Practices

See: Alternative Funding Sources

Associated Costs/Budget

Varies considerably depending upon the grant.



Corporate and Foundation Sponsorship

Executive Summary

Allocating funds and creating a dedicated recruitment budget continues to pose a major challenge for many California law enforcement agencies. Securing corporate and/or foundation sponsorships and creating new partnerships can alleviate some of the financial strain.

However, long term planning is essential to establishing effective collaborative measures.

It is necessary to assess projected recruitment expectations. Sponsorships and partnerships are very beneficial when planning special events, targeted advertising campaigns, seeking community involvement, and generating a nexus for other opportunities.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To enhance or supplement agency recruitment budgets with partnerships and/or corporate or foundation sponsorships.

Strengths

Provides funding for agency recruitment programs; creates a foundation for future growth; reduces impact on budgetary considerations when negotiating funding for the program. Alternative support may also be provided in services, including advertising space, air time, use of facilities, assistance with creating flyers or posters.

Weaknesses

Anticipated length of the sponsorship is predicated on various issues determined within a contractual agreement; there is no certainty of continued funding unless stated and included within a defining contract; alternative funding sources may impact an agency's decision making ability due to involvement from an outside source. Consideration of public perception is critical when accepting monetary donations, promotional products or tangible materials.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify corporations or foundations that have an interest in law enforcement; identify persons with corporate or foundation influence who have law enforcement connections; select beneficial sponsors that have a positive public image.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

The size of the department may have a direct correlation on the amount of funds needed from corporations or foundations.

Regional Considerations

Regional recruitment efforts may be supported by area corporations. Consider if the area is known for a particular industry and develop strategies to link the agency to corporations in that industry.

Experience/Resource Agencies

CHP, LAPD

Related Practices

See: Sponsoring Youth Activities; marketing best practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Should be limited to staff time necessary to do research and planning.

SECTION THREE:

Marketing and Use of Technology

Many recruitment professionals in law enforcement already recognize that the candidate pool of the future may be recruited from a growing list of alternative sources. In *Identifying Target Audiences*, we explain a first step to a successful recruitment program. Today, candidates for a law enforcement career range from young teens, college students, military personnel preparing for discharge, and individuals considering a career change, to name just a few.

With the variation in agency size, regional uniqueness, and the types of careers available, the law enforcement profession can offer an ideal career opportunity to a significant number of individuals willing and able to meet the challenge. The law enforcement community and its governmental heads must work cooperatively to market the profession as a whole to meet future personnel needs and reduce recruitment expenses.

In *Job Fairs* and *Special Events*, we describe how agency marketing goals can be accomplished through increased visibility within the community. By developing a marketing program and using *Promotional Materials* and *Mass Media and Regional Campaigns*, a sort of "brand recognition" can also help influence job seekers to choose a career in law enforcement.

"Word of mouth" is sometimes a very effective recruiting and marketing tool, but it will not occur automatically. Rather, it develops when you forge strong partnerships within the community. One means of building these relationships is through the establishment of youth programs, as described in *Citizen Academies*, *Junior Academies* and *Sponsoring Youth Activities*.

With a competitive labor market in the State of California, advertising and media campaigns or offering local education programs to help attract candidates may not extend the reach of your marketing campaign as far as you would like. We describe the great strides during this past decade in the *Use of Technology for Marketing*. This section will also present the use of *Agency Websites for Recruitment* and *Developing a Candidate Database*, along with suggestions on how e-mail and voice mail systems can facilitate the recruitment and selection processes.

Identifying Target Audiences



Executive Summary

Diversity is a key goal for most law enforcement agencies throughout the United States, one that can be achieved through targeted recruiting. A major component of a successful recruitment strategy is effective marketing, which involves knowing the audience and how to attract the interest of that audience. In order to achieve a diverse workforce, targeted marketing should be a standard and highly utilized procedure.

Objective

To develop a marketing strategy for target audiences

Strengths

Allows the agency to reflect the diversity of the community being served

Weaknesses

Possible resistance to targeting specific groups; may be lack of knowledge on how to best attract a diversified candidate population;

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify groups within the agency's community that are not adequately reflected in the workforce; educate recruiters about the best resources for attracting the identified audience; involve members of the groups being sought in the recruitment effort; involve community groups and publications that promote diversity; make recruitment flyers, posters, etc. attractive to all groups.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies may be more able to focus on face-to-face efforts between recruiters and individual candidates, but may have a smaller budget for directed advertising

Regional Considerations

Agencies should be aware of the makeup of their communities and the recruiting demographics within these communities; i.e., competition from private industry; law enforcement image within the community; problems with the testing program that need to be reviewed.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Recruiters should rely on the experience of agencies that have already recruited specific target groups. They should also involve community groups and targeted community events

Related Practices

See: State Recruiters' Association Participation.

Associated Costs/Budget

Targeting specific publications, magazines and forums for recruitment should help manage the recruiting budget. Costs will vary with publications and events.



Job Fairs and Special Events

Executive Summary

Job fairs and special events are valuable recruiting tools, because they can expose law enforcement agencies to persons seeking jobs and/or career changes. A variety of these fairs and events take place in areas throughout California. Research into the past success of these events is necessary to ensure that it is the right venue for an agency and that the event

attracts a diversity of job seekers. Associated costs range from free to substantial, depending on the event. As a result, careful budgetary consideration is important before committing to attend an event.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To enhance recruitment through job fairs and special event marketing.

Strengths

Targets specific groups; improves the image of the job; enhances the community image of law enforcement.

Weaknesses

Increased costs; need for travel to job fairs.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Target job fairs that attract the largest number of people as well as applicants that meet minimum qualification requirements; assign appropriate support personnel; secure appropriate budgets; develop theme or design of the booth based on the target audience (consider props and giveaways).

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Budget for displays will vary based on department need and target audience. Departments must be aware of current events for the area in which the job fair is taking place.

Regional Considerations

Agencies may want to consider going outside of their region to find a larger, more diverse, and/or more qualified applicant pool.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Corporate tradeshow (i.e. technology shows for IBM, IACP trade shows); military, regional law enforcement, and college job fairs; sporting events, social clubs, and community event sponsorships.

Related Practices

See: Promotional Materials; Mass Media and Regional Campaigns; and College Campus Recruiting.

Associated Costs/Budget

A one time booth purchase can cost between \$1000-\$7000, depending on its features.

College Campus Recruiting

Executive Summary

Although often more time consuming than other marketing efforts, college and university recruiting generally requires a lower cash output and can maximize results when the recruitment budget is limited. In addition, college-level applicants generally possess a broader knowledge base and are more likely to pass the required entry-level written exams. They are also more likely to be successful in academy and field training.

Departments should establish relationships with local colleges and use mentor programs and educational seminars to help their long-

term recruitment efforts. Internships and cooperative programs between agencies and colleges are very effective in enhancing recruitment efforts. Collateral to the effort of seeking candidates with college education is the need to examine the agency's educational incentives for these individuals.

Objective

To increase recruitment of college/university educated candidates and improve community perception of law enforcement.

Strengths

Targets candidates who value higher education; improves the profession; enhances the image of law enforcement.

Weaknesses

Requires large allocation of recruiter time; difficulty competing with corporate job offerings; requires significant budgetary support to be competitive; developing strong relationships takes time.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop a planning committee; assess the scope of the effort; secure budget; acquire appropriate support personnel; develop internships and co-op plans; assess agency educational incentives; network with college career centers and related education departments.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Programs will vary based on department size and available staff time. College size, type and the available labor pool will affect the scope of the recruiting effort.

Regional Considerations

Colleges located a significant distance from the agency will be less accessible for daily contact; however, programs and networking can still be developed and supported.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Department of Education; UC Regents;

Cal State Chancellor's Office; sporting events; social clubs; academic clubs; college Web sites; career centers; college newspapers.

Related Practices

See: Partnering with Academic Institutions, and Promotional Materials.

Associated Costs/Budget

Increased costs due to officer time, potential travel, and essential marketing resources.

Promotional Materials

Executive Summary

By effectively using promotional and marketing materials, recruiters can increase their departments' exposure and promote a positive public image. However, before launching a marketing and promotional campaign, certain criteria must be met. The agency must identify the target audience, determine the kind of promotional materials suited to the audience, develop a working knowledge of graphic design and production cost, and, following agency procurement practices, work with a graphics designer and print shop to produce the promotional materials.

The agency should be aware of the positive impact that promotional and marketing materials can have on individuals, whether or not they are interested in a career in law enforcement. These promotional and marketing materials are more than just a "free giveaway." Instead, they should be viewed as an extension of the department's image and a tool that can have a lasting effect on public perception.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To enhance agency image and exposure to the public through marketing materials.

Strengths

Provides information about an agency and its need(s); promotes a positive public image; demonstrates openness and invites communication between the agency and the public.

Weaknesses

Increase in cost; requires agency to prepare employees to be ready to respond appropriately to public inquiry.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine the agency objective; evaluate the means or concept to promote the objective; develop a budget; find companies or other agencies that have had success in developing promotional materials; assess the effectiveness of their effort.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies may want to consider collaborative marketing efforts or seek opportunity to borrow from others who have experienced success.

Regional Considerations

Developing a regional approach may reduce costs and still yield satisfying results.

Experience/Resource Agencies

CHP

Related Practices

See: Mass Media and Regional Campaigns; Use of the Public Information Officer; Identifying Target Audiences.

Associated Costs/Budget

Cost of materials will vary depending on each agency's goals, scale of effort and budget.

Mass Media and Regional Campaigns



Executive Summary

A successfully executed regional or statewide mass-media campaign can dramatically increase an agency's available applicant pool. Potential applicants can be targeted through mediums including public and local network television, radio, newspapers, Web advertising, billboards, and industry publications, resulting

in more successful recruitment efforts. Many agencies have the means to advertise through their human resources entity. Working together may also leverage limited resources and provide opportunity to coordinate advertising efforts.

Objective

To produce a cost-effective mass-media campaign that accommodates agency needs and budgetary constraints.

Strengths

Ability to reach large numbers at once; presents a positive image for the industry as a whole; creates successful partnerships with public and private industries.

Weaknesses

Budgetary and agency constraints may hamper effectiveness of campaign.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Contact experienced resource personnel (e.g., agency public information officer, local media) to develop a working knowledge of the marketing process; obtain appropriate personnel and management support; seek support and input of human resources department; secure budget; establish media contacts.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies may want to consider a collaborative regional campaign.

Regional Considerations

Availability of mass-media services will vary by region.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Employment Development Department; California Highway Patrol; Los Angeles Police Department; Associated Press; professional associations (e.g., Public Information Officers Association, Law Enforcement Recruitment Association of California).

Related Practices

See: Identifying Target Audiences; Promotional Materials; Use of the Public Information Officer.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on scope of the campaign and the methods used.

Junior Academies

Executive Summary

Developing the recruit of the future needs to be part of any long-term personnel strategy. Looking to the future through the development of local youth is not only proactive, but also integral to community based policing. A fourteen-year-old youth can be influenced in a very constructive way through early positive exposure to law enforcement officers. This can be easily experienced through a junior law enforcement academy.

A short-term structured junior academy can have numerous benefits. Some of these benefits include the positive impact on local youth which creates the possibilities for later career choices; the enhancement of department image and increased involvement in the community; the identification or re-direction of potentially errant youth; and that the program targets youth during formative years.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To encourage and positively influence the recruit of the future through youth Junior Law Enforcement Academies.

Strengths

Develops future recruitment pools; enhances the agency's image within the community.

Weaknesses

No guarantee that participants will become law enforcement officers at a later stage.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Select quality staff with the ability to relate to youth; ensure that the subject material is developed to emphasize the positive contact and aspects of law enforcement while remaining interesting; determine suitable environment for the classes; identify the criteria for attendance.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Where staffing is an issue or the community is small, several agencies can pool together to deliver the program. Partnering with community and youth organizations would be a positive step towards ensuring the target groups are identified.

Regional Considerations

Suited for all regions.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Costa Mesa Police Department, LAPD, Suisun Police Department, San Mateo County, Regional Explorer Scout Posts

Related Practices

See: Citizen Academies and Explorer Scout Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Varies due to size and depth of the program

Citizen Academies



Executive Summary

Citizen academies have been a tremendous tool for improving the working relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve. These academies provide citizens the opportunity to learn more about their law enforcement agency and to experience the duties and responsibilities of the law enforcement professional. At the same time, the academy provides law enforcement employees the ability to interact in a positive environment with members of their community.

This program can also be an excellent tool to assist in the recruitment process. A citizen

academy is a way to advertise the merits of the law enforcement profession to those participating in the program. Although many in the program are not looking for a full-time job or a long-term career, most will have extended family or a network of friends. The academy participant can be one of the best spokespersons for a department and can help direct people they know to consider law enforcement as a possible career. Those agencies interested in recruiting should consider implementing a citizen academy program.

Objective

To improve and enhance law enforcement's relationship with the community through the use of Citizen Academies.

Strengths

Can significantly improve the relationship with the community; can be a marketing tool for an organization and enhance the recruitment efforts.

Weaknesses

Requires dedicated staff to develop and administer the curriculum.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify the audience, scope of program, and venue; develop the curriculum; select the agency presenters.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

If an agency is very small and has limited resources, combining resources and presenting with another agency may be an alternative.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Numerous agencies have existing programs, including the Suisun Police Department, Vallejo Police Department, Fremont Police Department, and Sacramento County Sheriff's Department.

Related Practices

See: Junior Academies, other marketing-related best practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending upon the curriculum and number of participants. The majority of the expense may in staff overtime and handout materials.

Sponsoring Youth Activities

Executive Summary

Recruiting from inside a law enforcement agency is nothing new; most departments acknowledge the benefit of hiring reserves or volunteers who have already proven their capabilities. However, many departments are also taking advantage of the unique opportunity to successfully develop their own staff. Youth and adult programs, both paid and volunteer, not only promote good relations with local law enforcement, but also provide a future applicant pool. Examples of these programs currently in use include: Police Corps and Cadet Youth Programs; Explorer Scouts, Magnet Schools and Junior Academies; Internship and Student Worker Programs; Citizen Volunteer Programs; Cal Pals; and Reserve Volunteer Programs.

Before determining whether to create or expand youth or citizen volunteer programs, an agency should assess the benefits of such an effort. Long-term nurturing of potential applicants may prove to be a cost-effective way of recruiting. However, agencies should recognize that this is a long-term commitment.

If an agency decides to pursue this recruitment tool, they should do so with the knowledge that one of the most important strategies is to develop partnerships. School districts, local high schools and colleges, service clubs and other influential youth service organizations can prove critical to recruitment success.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To increase interactions between law enforcement and youth through establishment of a Youth Citizens Academy and Activities League.

Strengths

Educates youth about the role and responsibility of law enforcement officers; improves and expands working relationships with the public and private sectors; identifies youth who may be interested in becoming law enforcement officers.

Weaknesses

Youth may not be interested in participating in activities with law enforcement officers; possible lack of support from community-based organizations; no tracking record; limited resources; time, personnel, transportation, etc. to provide effective and meaningful activities.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Conduct needs assessment, including strategy to get involved in youth activities; connect with groups that provide youth activities and/or sponsor in-house activities/programs; determine expectations from law enforcement administrators, community at large, and youth.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

For larger departments, it may be feasible to consider having a Youth Citizens Academy. Smaller departments may find it more practical to develop relationships with existing community-based organizations.

Regional Considerations

Cooperation and partnering with regional law enforcement agencies will be beneficial to all parties.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Cal-Pal; SFPD; Vallejo PD; Ukiah PD; Eureka PD

Related Practices

See: Long-term planning and Marketing

Associated Costs/Budget

A one-year budget must include salary and benefits for officers, use of law enforcement equipment/vehicles, refreshments, etc. Identify additional funding streams from grants, corporation and foundation funding.

Use of the Public Information Officer (PIO)



Executive Summary

A public information officer trained in human resource marketing can be a valuable asset to an agency, especially for the recruitment effort. Stories that highlight the challenging aspects of careers in law enforcement, personal stories of agency officers, and incidents that illustrate compassion by members of the public and officers alike can influence and change public perception of the agency and the profession.

Use of a PIO provides opportunity for balanced reporting of policing that enhances the image of law enforcement. For example, stories on local programs, DARE, Sober

Graduation, Search and Rescue Teams, special task forces, and mutual aid are excellent opportunities for furthering the recruitment effort. People are more inclined to have interest in law enforcement and be able to influence others who are considering job opportunities when they read or hear about interesting, positive stories concerning the profession.

Objective

To use the public information function of the local agency to market the law enforcement profession recruiting efforts.

Strengths

Positively influences public opinion, enhances public image of the profession, spurs recruiting, and stimulates short and long-term support for the agency.

Weaknesses

N/A

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Select Public Information Officer and define responsibilities; provide marketing training; develop standards of reporting that demonstrate integrity of agency; identify sources that can be useful in providing information to the public; directly involve the PIO with the recruiter(s); encourage members of the agency to notify the PIO of human-interest events and matters of interest to the community; assess impact of PIO on recruiting goals.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

With limited resources, all members of the agency are potentially PIOs. However, at least one person should have the primary responsibility for coordinating the release of information.

Regional Considerations

Agencies within a common recruiting area may benefit from working collaboratively.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies have a PIO; LAPD and Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department.

Related Practices

See: Marketing and Developing the Recruitment Team Best Practices

Associated Costs/Budget

If the position is new, there are salary, benefits, and training costs; however, there is minimal cost beyond funding the position(s).

Candidate Processing

Executive Summary

Traditionally, the law enforcement candidate selection process has been based on supply exceeding demand, where there were many more qualified candidates than positions. Today, the situation has reversed. In addition, law enforcement is now dealing with a new "breed" of candidate: one that has a variety of career options and preferences quite different from prior generations. Many candidates are dissatisfied with the testing process because of

the amount of time and inconvenience involved. They are also concerned about the lack of communication with the agency regarding their status.

In today's period of low supply and high demand, agencies will be more successful if they keep the hiring process streamlined and the applicants informed.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To keep candidates informed and advised of their status during the selection process

Strengths

Candidates who are educated with respect to the process and their progress are much more likely to complete the testing; candidates will gravitate to agencies that personalize the testing and maximize communication with applicants

Weaknesses

Danger of staff becoming too "involved" with candidates; legal concerns in being too open with candidates who are disqualified.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Select personnel for recruitment/testing positions who are good communicators and people oriented; train in how to interact with applicants; appoint an individual as an ombudsman for the process

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

More streamlined testing would require less applicant communication.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

N/A

Related Practices

See: Use of Email, Use of Websites

Associated Costs/Budget

No anticipated costs if current staff can be trained and an existing manager assumes overall responsibility.

Use of Technology for Marketing

Executive Summary

Technology can aid a department in many aspects of the recruitment process by providing a competitive advantage and attracting more applicants to an agency. In particular, websites allow applicants the ability to readily access information and see the intellectual challenges offered by a high-tech law enforcement agency.

Technology can also help a department with launching a successful marketing campaign. Most qualified applicants under the age of 30 spend a good deal of time on the Internet. Reaching this candidate base with marketing

campaigns is very cost effective and provides great documentation for recruitment follow-up.

Using available technology allows the department to provide education for both potential applicants and members of the community. Through the Web, a department can spread a positive message to the community it serves by increasing awareness, sharing its mission, and personalizing itself.

Objective

To provide a larger applicant pool through the use of technology

Strengths

Cost effective; requires less time and staffing; serves as an information resource; allows applicant interaction with agency recruiters; capability to reach applicants throughout the country; available 24 hours a day.

Weaknesses

Initial setup and startup cost; staff training; continuous updating and maintenance of site.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify sites that attract a candidate base; provide a site to educate and gather information on potential applicants; assess the computer literacy of staff assigned to the program.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Small agencies may want to partner with other agencies to produce a larger candidate pool.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Los Angeles Police Department; California Highway Patrol; San Jose Police Department

Related Practices

See: Email to Facilitate Recruitment; Agency Websites for Recruitment; Developing a Candidate Database; and Utilizing the POST Website

Associated Costs/Budget

Initial costs for equipment; dedicated budgets for marketing, technology development and training are necessary.



Agency Websites for Recruitment

Executive Summary

Websites have the almost unique capacity to reach two kinds of audiences: geographically-dispersed potential applicants and those who use the Internet because of its convenience.

Websites have to be developed and designed with the intended user in mind. A common mistake in the development of websites is that the focus of the site is on an organization's structure. Because of the complexities of web-site development, an agency should determine how the site will be developed. The decision of whether to outsource the design and development or create it in-house includes financial considerations. It is also important to determine how the site will be maintained. If the agency wants potential applicants to keep coming back, then the site must be regularly updated.

Agencies must also consider how the applicant is going to find the website and other locations to which the applicant might be directed. A good starting point is to link the agency site to the POST website. It may also be useful to explore reciprocal arrangements with law enforcement agencies within the agency's region and to consider the possibility of expanding coverage statewide and with national associations to get the agency site more exposure. The broader the exposure, the greater the potential benefit to the agency in finding interested applicants.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To enhance local recruitment efforts using the global reach of the Internet.

Strengths

Websites allow agencies to provide information to potential recruits on a continual basis and are not geographically limited; may be used to automate "interest cards" and other steps in the recruitment process.

Weaknesses

Websites require regular updating and, depending on organizational goals, can be complex and costly to set up.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Adopt a clear set of goals for the website; determine the information structure; develop partnership with the agency human resources entity; decide how to develop it; create a budget, including annual operating costs; assess user needs; create a graphic design for the site; create a prototype and test it; develop the rest of the site; have a group of potential users test the site (beta testing); modify the site based on user feedback.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agencies without adequate financial support may develop their own recruitment websites as a result of the initiative of individual employees or community volunteers. Local academic institutions may also provide assist assistance.

Regional Considerations

Assess the availability of local Internet Service Providers who can assist with development and support of the website.

Experience/Resource Agencies

There are numerous websites with detailed advice on how to build a website. Review the CHP site and others for best practices.

Related Practices

See: Developing a Candidate Database.

Associated Costs/Budget

Varies depending on how the site is developed.

Utilizing the POST Website for Recruitment



Executive Summary

In an effort to assist agencies in the statewide problem of recruiting new applicants, POST has developed a section on their website dedicated to promoting employment opportunities at local agencies. Agencies with limited resources have the opportunity to utilize POST as a vehicle to disseminate information about their agency to potential candidates. Placing

listings on the POST site gives an agency exposure to candidates that they would not ordinarily reach. The POST website "Employment Opportunities" is also designed to provide direct linkage to an agency website by applicants.

Objective

To inform police agencies throughout the state of the opportunities available on the POST website.

Strengths

Cost effective and promotes agency recruitment efforts.

Weaknesses

Entry-level candidates may have problems finding the site.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Gather agency demographics and employment data; contact POST webmaster about listing.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

POST

Related Practices

See: Marketing and Use of Technology.

Associated Costs/Budget

None

Developing a Candidate Database

Executive Summary

Law enforcement recruiting has become increasingly more difficult throughout the state. The need to overcome this problem will require critical thinking and creativity. A long-term goal should be a statewide applicant database that would have the potential to significantly increase the applicant pool for any agency making use of the database. However, at this point there are many significant issues to be resolved before this goal can be achieved. Candidate databases are currently more likely to find success as a regional concept, where local agencies can address testing, applicant information, sharing of data and dealing with the security requirement of the information.

A regional program should be designed to meet common information needs. It should

have the capability to interface with participating agency websites that describe employment information for candidates and should allow applicants the flexibility to apply to numerous agencies with relative ease. For participating agencies, the database will likely provide an efficient tracking tool to support recruitment efforts. It should also allow agencies to be able to solicit the interest of potential applicants. Sharing information through a common database will promote competition among member agencies to streamline their selection processes. It will also require a cooperative, collaborative effort by agencies and their respective human resource partners.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To develop and maintain consolidated applicant information using a candidate database.

Strengths

Increases applicant marketability, communications (internally and externally), and the applicant pool from which to draw.

Weaknesses

Start up and maintenance costs associated with the database; database security.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop a partnership between each agency and its human resources entity; develop database and generic interest/application form by agency or regional group; determine the host agency; determine staffing; develop an e-mail list including all participating police agencies.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Small agencies may lack the resources and the recruitment needs sufficient to warrant participation.

Regional Considerations

All agencies would have access to the same database of applicants, potentially influencing recruiting patterns and increasing the number of applicants for agencies participating sharing the database.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Law enforcement and human resource agencies of San Bernardino County; agencies using consolidated testing.

Related Practices

See: Use of E-mail to Facilitate Recruitment.

Associated Costs/Budget

Development costs, individual agency and regional participant costs; database host maintenance and staffing costs to use and administer the information. Costs could be shared by all agencies participating in the database.

E-mail to Facilitate Recruitment



Executive Summary

E-mail is an effective and cost efficient tool to correspond with applicants and prospective applicants. It offers considerable cost savings over traditional telephone use, especially when corresponding with out-of-area candidates. A recruitment e-mail address is easy to set up and does not require extensive training to use. All departments should consider the use of e-mail in their departments.

Objective

To utilize the technology of e-mail to personalize the response to potential applicants and reduce the response time to inquiries.

Strengths

Creates a medium for direct communications with potential applicants; greatly reduces the cost associated with phone calls; provides the ability to personalize service and respond to requests efficiently and informally; provides a cost-free way to get feedback from applicants; allows the recruiter to maintain contact with the applicant throughout the process; provides a record of the communications for purposes of review and quality control.

Weaknesses

Staffing required to respond to e-mails in a timely manner; time to send the application packets from the e-mail requests; possibility of computer failure resulting in loss of responses.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program:

Establish a recruitment e-mail address; determine staffing resources to answer e-mails; promote the use of the e-mail system with the public through advertising; obtain management support for the system; establish guidelines for timely and professional demeanor in informal correspondence.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

Consider a regional e-mail response team for areas using a regional training center.

Experience/Resource Agencies

There are numerous agencies that currently utilize e-mail, such as the Ventura County Sheriff's Dept. and the CHP.

Related Practices

See: Agency Websites for Recruitment.

Associated Costs/Budget

E-mail access costs should be minimal; the main costs will be associated with the staffing necessary to respond to e-mails received.

Voice Mail to Facilitate Recruitment

Executive Summary

A phone voice mail system is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It offers recruitment personnel an opportunity to dedicate more time to other priority duties and is very inexpensive to maintain. Voice mail provides a large capacity for storing calls as well as immediate testing and selection information needed by the caller. The outgoing message can also direct callers to specific personnel,

alternative locations, and sites to obtain more detailed information (such as an agency or academy website). Ultimately, because information is readily accessible, this tool can increase the number of

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To implement and utilize voice mail systems to help facilitate the recruitment process.

Strengths

Accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; inexpensive to maintain; stores calls and provides immediate information; can direct callers to other personnel; increases the number of prospective candidates.

Weaknesses

Could be perceived as lacking the customer service "feel." May require updating for each testing cycle. Staffing required to respond to messages in a timely manner and to send application packets, etc.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Most agencies have a voice mail option via their phone service provider. Determine who will return messages and maintain the voice mail line(s).

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Applicable to all agencies. For agency recruiters who hold other responsibilities within the organization, this tool will be very beneficial. For agencies with larger recruitment teams, this will offer consistency in information provided to each caller.

Regional Considerations

If regional testing is in place, one phone number can be established for multiple agencies, allowing candidates to make one inquiry for testing phases.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies currently use voice mail systems; consult local resources.

Related Practices

See: Agency Websites for Recruitment; Regional Testing; Partnering with Academic Institutions; Developing a Candidate Database; E-Mail to Facilitate Recruitment.

Associated Costs/Budget

Depending upon the capabilities of the current service provider and the number of phone lines requested, minimal monthly charges will be incurred. Additional options include the capability to activate a personal pager when a message is left, remote access, and forwarding functions. An alternative to a voice mail system is a phone recorder.

Supporting Mentoring Programs

Executive Summary

Effective mentoring programs allow agencies to foster a relationship of commitment and trust with candidates by keeping them informed, interested, and in contact with the agency. Establishing a database to collect mentoring information will streamline service to candidates and allow recruitment budget tracking. A candidate database can also pro-

duce detailed reports to help evaluate the effectiveness of the agency's mentoring program and determine projected costs and staffing.

Objective

To support a mentoring program by developing an applicant database that allows recruiters to retrieve candidate information.

Strengths

Allows recruiters to track the progress of applicants; provides the ability to produce custom correspondence; allows accurate budget tracking; helps identify marketing and advertising mediums; keeps agency competitive with allied agencies and private-sector businesses.

Weaknesses

Associated costs to develop and maintain database.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Establish program oversight and management; identify or contract for technical support to create and maintain the database; identify database users; identify program needs and data to include in database; develop and present training.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

California Highway Patrol

Related Practices

See: Developing a Candidate Database; Email to Facilitate; and Agency Websites for Recruitment.

Associated Costs/Budget

8 Purchasing servers to host the application (\$1,000 - \$30,000)

- Developing the application (in house \$100,000+)
- Acquiring database software (\$10,000 - \$60,000)
- Cost for personnel involvement in the program.

SECTION FOUR:

Alternative Staffing and Employee Preparation

In order to deliver cost-effective and efficient service to the communities they serve, agencies constantly assess and reevaluate their allocation of personnel and resources. In some cases, recruitment difficulties have caused many law enforcement leaders to seek alternative means to staff the ranks of their organizations.

Across California, a variety of creative and cost-effective alternative staffing programs have been successfully created and maintained. In this section, we describe many examples, including the use of police cadets, reserve officers, citizen volunteers, and full-time non-sworn employees. Other alternative staffing programs that capitalize upon prior experience and institutional knowledge are described in Retired Officers.

Nurturing and preparing potential employees for the transition to peace officer is a long-term strategy some agencies have taken. In Junior Academies, we discuss the marketing of the profession to young people. Combined with programs aimed at middle and high school students, agencies can literally "grow their own" officers. These programs are described in Magnet Schools, Police Corps Programs, Explorer Scout Programs, and Interns/Student Workers.

You may find that these best practices are similar. How you implement any of them will depend on your specific needs. As an example, if you attempted to implement a police cadet program, you might decide upon fixed schedules, specific task training, whether it is a paid or volunteer position, and the age of the participants. However, if your goal is to enable cadets to become sworn peace officers, you might place more emphasis on pre-academy training, physical fitness, varying rotation assignments to provide exposure to the diversity of work, and mirroring the testing and selection process.

Once an individual's interest in a law enforcement career is piqued, mentoring programs certainly help prepare potential candidates for the police academy transition and ultimately a challenging and fulfilling profession. In addition, there is marked success for those candidates whose sponsoring agency implements programs described in Testing Orientation Programs, Pre-Academy Programs, and Post-Academy Orientation.

Police Cadets



Executive Summary

Traditional methods of staffing often prove inadequate due to training needs, service demands, schedules, and the increasingly varied needs of staff. As a result, consideration should be given to alternative staffing methods, including using non-traditional positions to perform various tasks. A Police Cadet or

Police Corps Youth program can be a cost effective means to enhance staffing and increase flexibility in scheduling.

Objective

To enhance current staffing using younger students interested in working with a law enforcement agency.

Strengths

Agencies can assess the skills and interests of participants; youths gain exposure to law enforcement; youth programs offer constructive alternatives for students; agencies may gain flexibility in scheduling by using cadets.

Weaknesses

Resource demand can be significant; participation may be inconsistent; transportation may be an issue for younger volunteers; costs may outweigh benefits if cadets leave the agency early.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine level of support from participating academic institutions; identify funding resources; define training curriculum; determine potential for local college affiliation; work with legal counsel on contracts and agreements; identify materials, equipment, and supply issues.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agencies should consider establishing partnerships with local youth organizations and/or citizen volunteer programs.

Regional Considerations

Best suited for local implementation

Experience/Resource Agencies

Consult with other agencies and POST.

Related Practices

See: Pre-Academy Programs, Mentoring Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the number of programs offered. Whenever possible, funding should come from the community (e.g., local Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, schools, and targeted fundraisers).

Reserve Officers

Executive Summary

Recruiting from a law enforcement agency's reserve program has been a common practice. Agencies acknowledge the benefit of hiring reserve officers because they have already demonstrated their ability to be successful peace officers. The reserve force, composed of citizen volunteers, promotes good relations with law enforcement and the community. Reserve officers also can be a source of future permanent peace officer applicants.

Before determining whether to create or expand a reserve officer program, an agency

should assess the costs of the effort. Nurturing of these potential applicants may prove to be a cost-effective way of recruiting. However, the objectives of the reserve program and the agency's recruitment needs must be clearly determined to assess whether the recruiting pool concept is at odds with the desire to have a viable reserve officer program.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To initiate or enhance a reserve officer program.

Strengths

Increases the number of agency law enforcement officers; the agency is able to assess the skills and interest of individuals; participants gain exposure to law enforcement; volunteer-based programs enjoy positive community relations.

Weaknesses

Requires additional resources; involves more supervision and coordination; there is no guarantee that participants will pursue a career in law enforcement.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Evaluate the need; determine program objectives; develop policies and procedures; identify program supervision and coordination responsibilities; identify resources; assess training costs; develop a budget; address legal issues (e.g., hold harmless and other contracts and agreements).

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Consult other agencies with established programs.

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees; Volunteers; Mentoring Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the program. There are different compensation practices and training costs. Most program costs are recurring.

Volunteers



Executive Summary

Traditional methods of staffing often prove inadequate due to training needs, service demands, schedules, and the increasingly varied needs of staff. Agencies should consider using alternative staffing methods, including using non-traditional positions to perform tasks. Volunteer youth and adult programs not

only provide alternatives to traditional staffing methods, but also promote good relations with the community and may provide a future applicant pool.

Objective

To increase recruitment by offering on-the-job training opportunities to volunteers.

Strengths

Volunteers perform duties traditionally performed by paid staff; participants gain exposure to law enforcement; volunteer-based programs enjoy positive community relations.

Weaknesses

Resource demand can be significant; participation may be inconsistent; transportation may be an issue for younger volunteers; time and resources committed to training volunteers may not be balanced by services received.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Evaluate current volunteer programs to determine recruitment potential; identify funding resources; determine level of support from participating local organizations; develop curriculum; determine whether to affiliate curriculum with a local college; work with legal counsel on contracts and agreements; identify materials, equipment, and supply issues.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agencies should consider establishing partnerships with local service agencies, youth programs, and citizen volunteer programs.

Regional Considerations

Best suited for local implementation

Experience/Resource Agencies

Consult with other agencies

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees; Mentoring Programs; Pre-Academy Programs; and Junior Academies.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the number of programs offered. Whenever possible, funding should come from the community (e.g., local Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, schools, and targeted fund-raisers). Partnering with educational institutions should also be considered.



Non-Sworn Employees

Executive Summary

An organizational assessment of functions performed by peace officers can result in the identification of assignments that may be more appropriately filled by non-sworn employees. Though the practice of reallocating sworn positions to non-sworn positions has been advocated for many years, there is value in reexamining previous decisions. Non-sworn employees may be considered for most positions where peace officer authority is not a relevant part of the assignment. When a department examines the appropriateness of converting a position to a non-sworn assignment, the essential elements of each position and its relationship within the agency must be thoroughly evaluated.

There are many examples where filling positions with non-sworn employees has been successful. Evidence shows that employees can be trained to perform non-peace officer functions

with limited enforcement duties in non-threatening situations. The challenge to the department in assessing the appropriateness of filling positions with non-sworn employees is to examine both tangible and subtle issues. For example, there may be obvious salary and benefits savings to the department that should be considered. There may also be value in assessing whether to convert some sworn supervisory and management classes into non-sworn employee positions.

When departments assess the need for enhanced specialization, non-sworn employees may be an appropriate solution. In some assignments considered for conversion, specialist employees may be hired because of specific training and/or education that they may possess. A specific career track for these positions may lead to higher levels of education and experience.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To assess the value of increasing the use of non-sworn employees in law enforcement agencies.

Strengths

Frees up sworn officers to handle duties requiring peace officer powers; may reduce training costs associated with rotation of assignments; improves employee morale; may improve deployment levels and service response capabilities; provides long term expertise in positions not requiring peace officer authority.

Weaknesses

May be difficult to implement; may reduce promotional opportunities; recruiting for some positions may be difficult; may reduce developmental assignment opportunities for sworn employees.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program:

Assign an assessment work group; identify positions in the department not requiring peace officer authority; study current positions to determine workload and required expertise; identify problem areas and concerns; develop background investigation requirements; determine budgetary, equipment and personnel needs;

develop the means to evaluate the impact of position reallocations.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Larger departments may have enough staff to meet agency needs and may also need skill levels that justify retaining sworn positions.

Regional Considerations

Non-sworn position may be used at varying levels by agencies within the region. This may be relevant when assessing employment opportunities for positions under considered for reallocation.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Numerous departments have addressed the civilian employee issue. See, in particular, the Costa Mesa PD.

Related Practices

See: Volunteers and Retired Officers.

Associated Costs/Budget

Increased costs may include personnel, equipment, benefits, administrative, training, travel and recruiting; increased time spent training new employees.

Retired Officers



Executive Summary

Many departments make use of retired employees to fill non-sworn positions. After years of performing law enforcement duties, these individuals have considerable knowledge and require little supervision and training. Some agencies (primarily sheriffs' departments) hire retired peace officers to work custody and courts. However, few agencies use retired officers to perform the full range of law enforcement duties. In fact, some have charter

provisions that prohibit the rehiring of retired members. In the event a retiree wants to work part-time and is prohibited from working for his or her previous employing agency, the retiree must seek employment elsewhere.

Given the difficulty agencies are facing in recruiting and retaining sufficient employees, it may be advantageous to assess different creative ways to use part time peace officers.

Objective

To enhance department capabilities through the use of retired members.

Strengths

Available, trained, and experienced retirees can fill many police department positions less expensively than full time employees; can be used only when needed; requires minimal supervision.

Weaknesses

May be viewed as less than professional to have "part-time cops"; some assignments may require retraining; compensation issues are complicated for PERS retirees; compensation may be prohibited for persons in other retirement systems.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Review pertinent legislation (at state and local levels); assess ability to work within existing requirements; determine whether provisions that impact the use of retired personnel can be overcome; seek legal advice; examine information about reciprocity between retirement systems; explore the feasibility of contracting with

retirees to perform specific functions.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller departments may use retired officers on a part-time basis or for on-call purposes, such as background investigations. Medium and larger agencies may use them in limited enforcement positions (e.g., desk, custody, dispatch, investigations support, community services).

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Sheriffs' departments often use part-time officers.

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees and Reserve Officers.

Associated Costs/Budget

Salary to support the use of retired employees; however, there may be offsetting savings where funds from vacant full time (but funded) positions are used.

Military Personnel

Executive Summary

Military employees are a valuable source of potential law enforcement candidates. Often, candidates have already been proven viable by adhering to standards similar to those of law enforcement agencies. Through their time in the military, they have gained maturity and life experience, thus increasing the likelihood of success in today's complex law enforcement environment.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To attract military personnel to a career in law enforcement.

Strengths

Viable pool of potential candidates; transition to law enforcement appealing due to similarities in military and law enforcement structure; candidates have already acquired responsibility through the military.

Weaknesses

Age requirements may alienate some candidates.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Working with the Human Resources entity, develop a plan; develop a database of military transition programs; work with base command to develop a working relationship with transitioning personnel.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

Candidates may reside out of state, but Regional Consolidated Testing can help alleviate the potential cost of these candidates. Consolidated Regional Recruitment teams can travel out of state to promote law enforcement employment. Local law enforcement agencies may gain from collaboration efforts.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Los Angeles Police Department, San Diego Police Department, San Diego Sheriff's Department, California Highway Patrol

Related Practices

See: Testing Orientation Programs; Mentoring Programs; and retention-related best practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Potential increase in costs due to additional staffing hours and marketing efforts (i.e., Internet advertising, print advertising, travel).

Non-Affiliated Academies



Executive Summary

Roughly 50% of law enforcement applicants fall short of agency and/or POST standards required for successful completion of the basic academy, the background investigation process, and the POST reading and writing test. Experience shows that these shortcomings also exist within the pool of non-affiliated cadets enrolled in law enforcement academy programs. However, because these candidates have already shown a commitment to the pursuit of a law enforcement career, it may be rewarding for agencies to focus recruitment efforts on this pool of potential applicants.

Beginning the recruitment effort of non-affiliated cadets early in their academy experience allows the agency to be selective in identifying desired candidates. It also allows the agency to familiarize the candidate with the job of the law enforcement officer, to introduce agency values, and to develop personal commitment in the cadet. Most importantly, it helps solidify the relationship among the cadet, the agency and the local community served by that agency.

Objective

To identify and attract qualified candidates who (unaffiliated with an agency) have put themselves into or through a law enforcement academy.

Strengths

Cadets have already shown commitment by enrollment in a certified training program; provides an opportunity for an agency to observe a cadet during academy training.

Weaknesses

Financial risk involved if agency makes an investment prior to completion of training (e.g., injury, unable to pass required tests); cadet may not be successful in meeting legal and regulatory hiring standards.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify program objectives and prepare a budget; assess agency and human resources (HR) support for the program; identify any hiring goals the agency may want to achieve by focusing on specific individuals.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

Availability and proximity of academy training facilities.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies recruit from pre-employment academies.

Related Practices

See: Police Cadets and Partnering with Academic Institutions.

Associated Costs/Budget

Contingent upon the scope of the program and available resources.



Police Cadet Programs

Executive Summary

Cadet programs provide opportunity for agencies to reach out to the community and create a partnership with its youth. They also help an agency gain additional support to address the needs of the department and its community. Cadet programs have the ability to provide structure to young people who are in high school and too young to work in law enforcement. A partnership with a local high school, community college, or other public safety entity within the community may provide interested youth with training and mentoring that promotes good citizenship and responsibility. In addition, cadet programs exposes youth to potential job opportunities and promote an understanding of career possibilities.

Many of these programs require students to remain in school, maintain acceptable grades and stay trouble free. For their part, cadets are provided opportunities to work with law enforcement officers in a positive, supportive environment. They participate in training that reflects the rigors they would face in a public safety career.

An agency assessing development of a cadet program must realize that it is a long-term commitment and requires several partnerships to achieve success. School districts, high schools, colleges, service clubs, and other youth service organizations are potential partners and can prove valuable to such a program.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To maximize local recruitment efforts through mentoring and on-the-job training opportunities for younger students or those interested in volunteering with a law enforcement agency.

Strengths

Provides young people with potential career direction and positive exposure to law enforcement; fosters positive community support; youth programs offer constructive alternatives for students often too young for law enforcement; may enhance opportunity for agency to reflect the demographics of the community.

Weaknesses

Requires significant resources; there is no guarantee that participants will pursue a career in law enforcement; transportation may be an issue for younger volunteers.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Assess the objectives of a cadet program; examine the potential for community partnerships (e.g., public schools, other public safety departments); determine costs of the program; develop a training plan; identify the program coordinator; address potential legal issues (i.e., contracts, agreements); identify funding sources.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies may find value in a program that combines all public safety departments of the city or county; allows sharing resources and costs.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

A variety of programs are in effect; consult agencies with established programs.

Related Practices

See: Pre-Academy Programs, Mentoring Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the extent of the program. Program funding may be sought from the community, such as the local Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, schools, and fundraisers.

Explorer Scout Programs



Executive Summary

Scouting and law enforcement agencies have enjoyed a long and positive relationship. Consistent with the values of scouting, explorer scout programs are intended to develop good, responsible citizens. There are many examples where young people have benefited from their involvement with a law enforcement sponsored Explorer Scout troop. Some of the benefit has been visible from individuals becoming peace officers. A collateral value in the scouting and law enforcement relationship

is the public awareness of positive, structured mentoring and role modeling of young community members.

However, it should be noted that these programs are costly and involve long-term commitment. There is no assurance that a significant number of participants will become employed by law enforcement agencies.

Objective

To maximize local recruitment efforts using explorer scout programs.

Strengths

Scouting programs affiliated with law enforcement agencies have enjoyed long-standing community support; youths gain positive exposure to law enforcement as a potential career; offers a constructive outlet for young people.

Weaknesses

Resource demand can be significant; there is no guarantee that participants will pursue a career in law enforcement; program does not extend to the age of employment for law enforcement; transportation may be an issue for participants.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify program goals and objectives; assess program recruitment potential; determine the costs of the program and potential sources of support; evaluate coordination and supervision requirements; determine the training and agency uses of the participants; identify equipment needs; identify funding sources.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agencies should consider establishing partnerships with local youth agencies, schools, and community groups.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

A variety of programs exist; consult agencies with established programs.

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees; Volunteers; Mentoring; and Pre-Academy Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the size of the program and the number of participants. Funding sources may include agency budget and/or community support (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, schools, and targeted fundraisers).

Reserve Officers

Executive Summary

Recruiting from a law enforcement agency's reserve program has been a common practice. Agencies acknowledge the benefit of hiring reserve officers because they have already demonstrated their ability to be successful peace officers. The reserve force, composed of citizen volunteers, promotes good relations with law enforcement and the community. Reserve officers also can be a source of future permanent peace officer applicants.

Before determining whether to create or expand a reserve officer program, an agency

should assess the costs of the effort. Nurturing of these potential applicants may prove to be a cost-effective way of recruiting. However, the objectives of the reserve program and the agency's recruitment needs must be clearly determined to assess whether the recruiting pool concept is at odds with the desire to have a viable reserve officer program.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To initiate or enhance a reserve officer program.

Strengths

Increases the number of agency law enforcement officers; the agency is able to assess the skills and interest of individuals; participants gain exposure to law enforcement; volunteer-based programs enjoy positive community relations.

Weaknesses

Requires additional resources; involves more supervision and coordination; there is no guarantee that participants will pursue a career in law enforcement

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Evaluate the need; determine program objectives; develop policies and procedures; identify program supervision and coordination responsibilities; identify resources; assess training costs; develop a budget; address legal issues (e.g., hold harmless and other contracts and agreements).

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Consult other agencies with established programs.

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees; Volunteers; Mentoring Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the program. There are different compensation practices and training costs. Most program costs are recurring.

Volunteers



Executive Summary

Traditional methods of staffing often prove inadequate due to training needs, service demands, schedules, and the increasingly varied needs of staff. Agencies should consider using alternative staffing methods, including using non-traditional positions to perform tasks. Volunteer youth and adult programs not

only provide alternatives to traditional staffing methods, but also promote good relations with the community and may provide a future applicant pool.

Objective

To increase recruitment by offering on-the-job training opportunities to volunteers.

Strengths

Volunteers perform duties traditionally performed by paid staff; participants gain exposure to law enforcement; volunteer-based programs enjoy positive community relations.

Weaknesses

Resource demand can be significant; participation may be inconsistent; transportation may be an issue for younger volunteers; time and resources committed to training volunteers may not be balanced by services received.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Evaluate current volunteer programs to determine recruitment potential; identify funding resources; determine level of support from participating local organizations; develop curriculum; determine whether to affiliate curriculum with a local college; work with legal counsel on contracts and agreements; identify materials, equipment, and supply issues.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agencies should consider establishing partnerships with local service agencies, youth programs, and citizen volunteer programs.

Regional Considerations

Best suited for local implementation

Experience/Resource Agencies

Consult with other agencies

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees; Mentoring Programs; Pre-Academy Programs; and Junior Academies.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the number of programs offered. Whenever possible, funding should come from the community (e.g., local Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, schools, and targeted fund-raisers). Partnering with educational institutions should also be considered.

Interns/Student Workers

Executive Summary

Student intern and student worker programs can be a viable source for recruitment. These often involve young people who have completed high school but are not old enough to meet the age eligibility requirement for employment in law enforcement. They are exposed to the law enforcement environment by working part-time while they also attend college. There is usually a partnership between the agency and college to support such ventures.

Some programs provide part-time salary for the student, which allows the student to have a source of income while attending college. This

is a costly difference compared to a program based on volunteers. However, the lack of part-time pay in the volunteer-based program is a significant detractor. Both programs usually have specified continuing education requirements and work assignments in the agency. In addition, both seek to develop and maintain interest in a law enforcement career.

Long term nurturing of potential applicants through internships and student worker programs may prove to be cost-effective means of recruiting. However, agencies should recognize that this is a long-term commitment.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To enhance local recruitment efforts through mentoring and on-the-job training opportunities for younger students interested in law enforcement employment.

Strengths

Involves young people with law enforcement before they meet eligibility requirements; provides paid, part-time work for them while they continue their education; program is a positive community outreach for young people; youth programs offer constructive alternatives for students.

Weaknesses

Costly, long-term investment; where the program cannot offer part-time salary, participation may be difficult; requires coordination and oversight; no guarantee that participants will pursue a career in law enforcement; transportation may be an issue for participants.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Define program objectives; examine the paid versus unpaid program; assess possibility for support of local organizations; determine coordination and oversight responsibilities; define the curriculum for all training and the appropriateness of work to be performed; assess whether to affiliate the program with a local college for course credit; identify resource requirements; determine funding source(s).

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Seek partnerships with local youth agencies, schools, and community groups.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

A variety of programs are in effect; consult agencies with established programs.

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees and Volunteers;

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will depend on the scope of the program and number of youths involved. Where there are paid, part-time positions, budget augmentation will be necessary; additional financial support for paid and unpaid programs could be sought from community organizations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, schools, and fundraisers).

Police Corps Programs

Executive Summary

The police corps concept has been around since the 1980s; however, it has received mixed reviews. As part of the President's 1994 Federal Crime Bill, the program was re-instituted. It requires a partnership with the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, the state, local colleges/universities, and individuals that participate. The model involves law enforcement agencies seeking applicants from colleges/universities where they are about to graduate. An agency participating in the program is able to offer students financial inducement to enter law enforcement for a specified amount of time.

These individuals attend regular academy training, but they must also receive specific curricula on community policing and service. They agree to remain with a law enforcement agency for four years. For this they receive up to \$30,000 of forgiven college expenses. The program also covers training costs incurred by agencies and academies. The benefit of the program is the ability to attract higher educated candidates, and the hope is that many of these individuals will remain in law enforcement beyond their commitment.

Objective

To enhance recruitment efforts through the use of the police corps concept.

Strengths

Attracts applicants with college/university education; offers financial incentives for individuals; commits them to an agency for a specified period; able to develop and assess an individual's skills and interest in law enforcement; may motivate well-educated participants to remain with an agency.

Weaknesses

To be a significant avenue for attracting individuals, the program needs to be widely available; existing programs reflect mixed reviews and high cost; following contract period, individuals may leave law enforcement.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine level of support from local participating agencies; define the curriculum for training; identify required resources; identify funding sources and reporting requirements.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

Requires multiple agency and state participation.

Experience/Resource Agencies

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs

Related Practices

See: Non-Sworn Employees; Volunteers; Identifying Target Audiences; Sponsoring Youth Activities; Mentoring Programs; Pre-Academy Programs; and Junior Academies.

Associated Costs/Budget Training and partnership costs for agency, college and/or academy; usual employment expenses for employees.



Magnet Schools

Executive Summary

Magnet school programs are a partnership between junior and senior high schools and public and private organizations. They focus on providing meaningful knowledge and skills-based education that is relevant to the work environment high school students may encounter when they graduate and begin seeking employment. Successful completion of the program meets high school graduation requirements. Some law enforcement agencies have become participants in magnet school programs with their school districts, resulting in incorporation of curricula relevant to the law enforcement profession.

Graduates of the program are not old enough to be peace officers. To address this fact, some

agencies have developed paid positions (e.g., cadets, student workers, and community services officers) for these graduates. This allows participants to be employed and continue to be part of the profession and the agency while awaiting law enforcement eligibility.

The path from magnet school to employment as a law enforcement officer is a costly, long-term venture. As a result, an agency must evaluate its commitment in time and funding against the potential benefits of the investment. Long-term nurturing of potential applicants may be a cost-effective way of recruiting.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To maximize local recruitment efforts through partnering with local school districts and youth programs.

Strengths

Agencies become part of the community support group for young people; through cooperative effort, youths gain educational exposure to law enforcement; enhances relationships with school districts; participation in a magnet school program reflects favorably upon the agency; youth programs offer constructive alternatives for students.

Weaknesses

Resource demand may be significant; there is no assurance participants will pursue a career in law enforcement; transportation may be an issue for some students; may require managing grant resources and reporting.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine level of support with participating school district and other organizations; assess partnership resource responsibilities (i.e., curricula, financial role, transition programs, grant management and reporting, staffing); identify resource requirements; determine funding sources.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies may only be able to participate with soft match funding (i.e., salary and benefits for program staff support) and seek financial support from community sources; it may be necessary to seek volunteers to support the agency role in the program.

Regional Considerations

Where residents of several communities attend a common magnet school, law enforcement agencies may find it beneficial to partner with the school district and each other.

Experience/Resource Agencies

A variety of programs exist; consult agencies with established programs

Related Practices

See: Volunteers; Explorer Scout Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the scope of program. Potential funding sources may include agency budget, the school district, grants, community support (i.e., Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, and fundraisers).

Junior Academies

Executive Summary

Developing the recruit of the future needs to be part of any long-term personnel strategy. Looking to the future through the development of local youth is not only proactive, but also integral to community based policing. A fourteen-year-old youth can be impacted in a very constructive way through early positive exposure to law enforcement officers. This can be easily experienced through a junior law enforcement academy.

A short-term structured junior academy can have numerous benefits. Some of these benefits include the positive impact on local youth which creates the possibilities for later career choices; the enhancement of department image and increased involvement in the community; the identification or re-direction of potentially errant youth; and that the program targets youth during formative years.

Objective

To encourage and positively influence the recruit of the future through youth "Junior Academies"; to identify elements of the community as future law enforcement officers.

Strengths

Providing positive community contact through outreach to local youth; benefits gained through such programs go beyond developing future recruitment pools to enhance the agency's image within the community.

Weaknesses

Poor development and inappropriate selection of staff can be detrimental to the overall goals; no guarantee that participants will become law enforcement officers at a later stage.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Select quality staff with the ability to relate to youth; ensure that the subject material is developed to emphasize the positive contact and aspects of law enforcement while remaining interesting; determine suitable environment for the classes; identify the criteria for attendance and other issues such as ethnic and cultural issues.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Department size should not overly affect the development of junior academies. Where staffing is an issue or the community is small, several agencies can pool together to deliver the program. Partnering with community and youth organizations would be a positive step towards ensuring the target groups are identified.

Regional Considerations

Suited for all regions.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Costa Mesa Police Department, LAPD, Suisun Police Department, San Mateo County, Regional Explorer Scout Posts

Related Practices

See: Citizen Academies and Explorer Scout Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget



Testing Orientation Programs

Executive Summary

Recruiting has become increasingly difficult for most agencies throughout the state. Developing and implementing testing orientation programs can significantly increase the number of applicants who are successful in the hiring process. By attending such programs, applicants develop a greater understanding of

the law enforcement profession and the individual organization. In addition, orientation programs allow applicants to meet and interact with agency representatives, thus building successful and lasting working relationships.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To orient potential applicants to the law enforcement profession and assist them throughout the testing process.

Strengths

Helps potential applicants fully understand the testing process; familiarizes the applicant with the requirements and risks associated with law enforcement; allows for personal interaction and mentoring; develops organizational understanding and loyalty.

Weaknesses

Requires dedicated staff to plan and implement; needs consistent structure and delivery.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop timelines showing all workshops and seminars; develop a structured outline for each workshop; insure organizational acceptance; develop course content and identify critical areas of instruction; select motivated instructors; secure sites for all scheduled events; adjust budget if necessary.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Can be implemented regardless of agency size.

Regional Considerations

Program may vary depending on organizational size. Smaller or more rural agencies may want to consider pooling resources.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Oakland Police Department, California Highway Patrol

Related Practices

See: Pre-Academy Programs and Mentoring Programs

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs are relatively minimal; some overtime may be needed for participants

Pre-Academy Programs



Executive Summary

One of the major problems associated with entry-level recruits has been a high drop out rate during the first half of the academy. Some agencies have experienced losses as high as thirty-five percent (35%) of the recruit class. Because recruiting is highly labor and cost intensive for law enforcement departments, the loss of new hires can severely set back the effort to fill sworn positions. While the reasons for these losses are varied, the central problem is the transition from a generally less demanding life-style to that of a rigorously structured environment. Applicants often think they are prepared for this move, but experience demonstrates that they can become overwhelmed during initial training. The exceptions are recruits coming from the military.

Pre-academy training has proven effective in reducing attrition rates up to 30% to an overall level of 2-5%. The Pre-Academy creates a solid foundation of organizational loyalty. Some agencies have also experienced a collateral benefit of increased retention through the probationary period. Pre-Academies are not overly expensive to implement; the savings on losses through attrition quickly offset the initial outlay. Also, mentors can often identify recruit weaknesses that are not usually observed until the employee is "in-service". Early detection and correction of such behavior is beneficial from both a training and liability standpoint.

Objective

To reduce the attrition rate of entry-level recruit officers through a structured transition from non-law enforcement to academy recruit.

Strengths

Lowers attrition rates by up to 30%; saves recruiting costs; increases long term loyalty to organization; improves performance.

Weaknesses

Has the potential to adversely affect recruits if implemented incorrectly; requires additional staff hours; may be difficult to locate suitable venues.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify suitable staff; secure suitable training areas; develop a balanced curriculum; develop effective assessment tools; ensure consistent management support.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

Regionalizing, pooling and small department partnerships should be considered.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Costa Mesa Police Department (under 200 sworn personnel; smaller classes in partnership with other departments); Ventura Sheriff's Department (larger departments; consistent class sizes).

Related Practices

See: Post-Academy Orientation, Mentoring Programs.

Associated Costs/Budget

Increased costs include staff costs and salary; additional office supplies; physical training equipment; additional wages for training staff (overtime or back-fill depending upon agency size); other soft costs such as clerical, administrative support.

Post-Academy Orientation

Executive Summary

Considering the complexities of the law enforcement career, fostering the success of new recruits is most likely to be realized through an effective orientation program within a professional law enforcement agency. A Post-Academy orientation program helps recruits assimilate into the organization, fostering both their goals and those of the agency.

After the recruitment, identification, selection and hiring of recruits, the academy and field training program helps prepare new employees for the rigors of the field. However, an element often lacking in these structured training programs is the "in-house" orientation. Post-Academy orientation programs allow new offi-

cers - both those starting a law enforcement career as well as those transferring their skills from another organization - to learn the departmental culture, develop new relationships, and learn the operating procedures of the city, county or state agency. Effective preparation positions officers for greater success in the field training program and the subsequent probationary period.

Orientation programs are an excellent opportunity for management to convey departmental goals, objectives and performance expectations. Receiving this kind of information in a structured environment early in a career can have positive effects on new employees.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To orient recruits and trainees and facilitate the transition from the academy to the FTO program.

Strengths

Helps new recruits understand job requirements and FTO process; reduces attrition; less costly than a pre-academy; may allow for increased esprit de corp.

Weaknesses

May represent significant investments of time, labor, and cost; may become a mere listing of policies rather than a thorough welcome; without appropriate structure, the program may not meet objectives.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Insure organizational acceptance; develop program content; identify which personnel will participate in the program; determine the duration and scheduling of the program; adjust budget if necessary.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Orientation programs may be tailored to agency size.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Investigate successful programs at other agencies with similar needs and goals.

Related Practices

See Pre-Academy Programs and Mentoring Programs

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on scope of the program.

Mentoring Programs



Executive Summary

The practice of mentoring new employees has long been used by businesses in the private sector. Its potential for exerting a positive impact on recruitment, retention and career development is now being recognized by law enforcement agencies. While mentoring programs can be relatively inexpensive tools to improve recruit retention, their success is

dependent on the professionalism and confidentiality practiced by the mentors and the support of the agency for the program. The relationship between the mentor and the recruit is also crucial to success.

Objective

To provide a resource for recruits to obtain personal, confidential guidance from a mentor.

Strengths

Tends to establish career-long relationships and agency loyalty; demonstrates that the agency is willing to personally invest in new recruits; develops the skills of employees chosen to be mentors.

Weaknesses

Requires specific training for mentors in order for the program to be effective; program success is dependent on the mentor's attitude toward the administration and/or the public; requires ongoing evaluation and development of new mentors; confidentiality issues can lead to conflicts; use of FTOs as mentors may create conflict (i.e., between the role of the FTO as the enforcer of agency standards and the role of the mentor as a source of guidance and support).

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Solicit officers willing to act as mentors; provide peer-counseling training for mentors; clearly identify confidentiality expectations; directly communicate administration support for the mentoring program.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Larger agencies may need to assign more recruits to a single mentor; smaller agencies may provide one-on-one relationships.

Regional Considerations

Agencies within the same region may provide a forum for mentors and/or peer counselors to share knowledge and experiences; a subgroup may be assigned to mentor academy cadets (not from their own agencies).

Experience/Resource Agencies

Agencies offering peer counseling training; qualified psychologists for referral of more serious counseling issues.

SECTION FIVE:

Attracting and Retaining Staff

As competition in the private sector for top technical and business talent accelerated in recent years, human resources departments necessarily became more innovative in developing programs to attract and retain employees. In this section, you will be introduced to a number of best practices intended to transfer successful recruitment and retention strategies from both private industry and the law enforcement community.

Generally speaking, the current workforce has become more transient across the nation and in California. Job applicants are highly selective in their career choices and more research-oriented, partly due to the vast amount of information available via the Internet. The law enforcement candidate is no different and will often seek employment with an agency that offers a personalized appeal.

Because first impressions of prospective employees are important, this section calls attention to mentoring and employee orientation programs. These programs have become very popular for law enforcement agencies and are popular with candidates.

An organization's culture, style of policing, or regional location may also be significant to those seeking a comfortable work environment and high quality of life. Long commutes and

the high cost of living in many regions of the State have contributed to recruitment problems. Several best practices, such as *Alternative Work Schedules*, *Take Home Cars/Commute Incentives*, *Relocation Assistance*, and *Job Sharing/Part Time Employment* are among examples of innovative programs described in this section. These programs have the dual benefit of enhancing both recruitment and retention efforts.

Any agency seeking a more educated applicant pool will try to attract college graduates. We describe two programs aimed at attracting this group, *Student Loan Forgiveness* and *Educational Incentives*. Such incentives not only attract new employees, but assist in retaining them as well.

Mentoring Programs

Executive Summary

The practice of mentoring new employees has long been used by businesses in the private sector. Its potential for exerting a positive impact on recruitment, retention and career development is now being recognized by law enforcement agencies. While mentoring programs can be relatively inexpensive tools to help attract and retain employees, their success is dependent on the professionalism and confidentiality practiced by those involved.

A mentoring program specific to retaining employees is unique. It is common for such programs to be utilized for recruitment purposes,

but is sometimes overlooked as a resource for developing employees over the life of a career. As individuals are preparing for advancement, transferred to assignments or promote in rank, they may be presented with an unfamiliar and new work environment. To help prepare the employee, lessen any unneeded stress, and allow for transitional training, a mentor program can help the employee transition much more smoothly

Objective

To provide a resource for employees to obtain personal, confidential guidance from a mentor who will help ensure a successful law enforcement career.

Strengths

Tends to establish career-long relationships and agency loyalty; demonstrates that the agency is willing to personally invest in the employee's development and emotional health; helps develop professional skills and instills a sense of pride for the employees chosen to be mentors.

Weaknesses

Requires specific training for mentors in order for the program to be effective; program success is dependent on the mentor's attitude toward the administration and/or the public; requires ongoing evaluation and development of new mentors; confidentiality issues can lead to conflicts.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify the objectives to be accomplished; solicit staff willing to act as mentors; provide peer-counseling training for mentors; clearly identify confidentiality expectations; directly communicate administration support for the mentoring program.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

This program is particularly well suited for smaller agencies as transfers and movement throughout the agency is less. Larger agencies may need to designate more mentors to avoid overwhelming the mentors.

Regional Considerations

Agencies within the same region may provide a forum for mentors and/or peer counselors to share knowledge and experiences; a subgroup may be assigned to mentor academy cadets (not from their own agencies).

Experience/Resource Agencies

Agencies offering peer counseling training; qualified psychologists for referral of more serious counseling issues.

Related Practices

See: Pre-Academy Programs and Career Ladders.

Associated Costs/Budget

Agencies will likely incur additional employee related costs when partnering of the employee and mentor occurs.



Overall Benefits Package

Executive Summary

As recruitment and retention have become more competitive, it is essential that employers reexamine the benefits they offer to employees. Many benefits packages have not been assessed against the interests of younger employees or the potentially different interests of senior employees. Instead, most enhancements of benefit packages have occurred as a result of contract negotiations.

Agencies, along with their human resource departments, should comprehensively examine options that may improve overall benefits packages for employees. These may include both monetary and non-monetary benefits. It may be appropriate to consider options-based benefits from which employees with differing

needs may choose. The examination should include review of the benefits offerings by private industry and other law enforcement agencies.

In today's competitive climate, candidates "shop" agencies and examine benefits packages. In addition, because of changing attitudes about work, many employees have a more transient view of their careers. Agencies often invest time and money into employees who leave for other agencies or different jobs that offer better salary and benefits packages. In fact, aside from organizational and cultural issues, employees consistently identify benefits packages as a top reason for changing jobs.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To assess the needs of potential recruits and current employees in order to develop an overall benefits package designed to assist in the recruitment and retention effort.

Strengths

Attracts more recruits; assists in retaining employees; will ultimately reduce turnover and training costs.

Weaknesses

Difficult to forecast fiscal impact; limited ability to influence contract negotiations between employing entity and employee bargaining units; may need to be adjusted frequently to remain competitive with other employers in the area.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine budgetary issues; conduct cost analysis survey, develop a turnover cost formula, and survey employees to identify desired benefits; seek support of governmental entities responsible for negotiating and approving employee contracts (i.e., MOA/MOU process).

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

The size of a department's budget will impact its ability to offer benefits. State and local entities may influence some of the benefits that may be considered (e.g., PERS retirements vs. private retirement, health benefits, and retirement accounts).

Regional Considerations

Benefits may be determined by regional comparison (cost of living, tax base, housing costs, size of agency, comparable agencies).

Experience/Resource Agencies

Along with Human Relations Department, research benefits that meet the specific needs of the agency.

Related Practices

See: All retention-related best practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Budget increases associated with augmented benefits; costs to administer additional benefits; survey costs.

Longevity Pay

Executive Summary

Longevity pay is designed to encourage the retention of long-term, highly skilled and experienced personnel. The program increases the levels of pay and/or benefits at various intervals throughout the careers of the employees of an organization. This encourages employees to remain with one organization to build up their pay level. Turnover, along with the need to hire and train new employees, should be reduced. Although this program

results in higher costs, employees will have a much higher level of skills, knowledge and abilities, producing a more efficient work force that is less prone to costly mistakes.

The agency turnover rate and the reasons for the turnover will need to be determined. If an agency is losing experienced, tenured employees to other departments or professions, a longevity program may be desirable.

Objective

To encourage the retention of employees through the use of increased pay and/or benefits over the length of a career.

Strengths

Rewards employees for long-term employment; emphasizes development of skills that will benefit both the employee and the agency; enhances efficiency of the organization; reduces turnover and the need to hire and train new staff.

Weaknesses

Associated direct costs. Each agency must analyze this program for its long-term impact. All direct and indirect costs must be calculated to determine true cost.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop the concept; develop a budget that the organization can consider; develop policies and requirements regarding eligibility; examine personnel rules and MOUs.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies throughout the state incorporate some form of longevity pay. Master Officer, Corporal, Deputy II positions can be a type of longevity pay. Other agencies may increase pay based upon tenure in the organization. The Newport Beach Police Department allows the conversion of flex leave time to pay based upon years of service.

Related Practices

See: Overall Benefits Package; Career Ladders; and Recognition and Rewards.

Associated Costs/Budget

Program costs and budget impact can be significant factor. These costs will depend on the degree to which an agency implements the practice.

Relocation Assistance

Executive Summary

The private sector has used relocation incentives and bonuses for years to help entice quality employees. The public sector has also used this practice; however, it has generally been restricted to executive management positions. Relocation assistance may need to be expanded to attract quality employees to the law enforcement profession.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To use relocation assistance as an incentive to attract applicants to lower paying rural departments and/or departments impacted by high costs of living and housing.

Strengths

May attract applicants to departments having the most difficulty recruiting successful candidates.

Weaknesses

Both the agency and the municipality must address fiscal and political ramifications of incentives.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine fiscal impact; identify political ramifications (e.g., preference of local candidates); draft background and purpose; determine criteria for assistance; market availability of incentives both locally and statewide.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies may not be able to provide the same level of incentives as larger departments.

Regional Considerations

Areas with low cost of living and housing often provide lower salaries. High-cost areas may have a combination of salary and housing problems.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Los Angeles Police Department (provides \$2,000 in relocation assistance for candidates entering the academy who were living 150+ miles from Los Angeles, reduced airfares through United Airlines, and reduced hotel costs during initial transition).

Related Practices

See: Overall Benefits Package; Establishing Sleeping Facilities; and Take Home Cars/Commute Incentives.

Associated Costs/Budget

Will vary depending on incentives offered.

Student Loan Forgiveness

Executive Summary

The use of student loan forgiveness programs to encourage successful recruitment efforts is a tool widely used in the teaching profession as well as in private industry and the military. Providing such programs can help recruit college-educated candidates, who are critical to the increasingly complex law enforcement profession. Research has concluded that college educated individuals not only make better offi-

cers but also improve the law enforcement profession overall. Loan forgiveness programs can be used for new recruits as well as to help retain current officers who would like to continue their education. Moreover, identifying college graduates with outstanding student loans creates a "ready made" candidate pool to which recruitment information can be sent.

Objective

To support successful recruitment and retention efforts by establishing local and state student loan forgiveness programs.

Strengths

Encourages hiring college-educated candidates; identifies a potential pool of candidates by flagging college graduates who have outstanding loans to be paid off or forgiven.

Weaknesses

May attract candidates to law enforcement solely to pay off a loan, resulting in increased attrition after loan payment is accomplished.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop the objectives of the program; create criteria and the process for receipt of the incentives; identify funding sources.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agencies without local educational institutions may have to recruit outside their area to find students with outstanding loans.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Federal Perkins Loan program; Oakland Police Department.

Related Practices

See: College Campus Recruiting, Overall Benefits Package, Educational Incentives.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs are specific to the size of the agency and whether the agency or city/county is funding loan-forgiveness. A state-funded program could benefit all agencies.



Signing Bonuses

Executive Summary

Offering law enforcement signing bonuses can be compared to the bonuses offered to professional athletes to encourage them to commit to a contract for services. In addition, the military has used enlistment bonuses. Bonuses can be used to lure prospective recruits to one agency rather than another that does not offer such an incentive.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To provide incentives to prospective applicants through the use of signing bonuses.

Strengths

Provides an immediate payment to newly hired employees; significant inducement for applicants considering multiple employment opportunities.

Weaknesses

Increased costs related to the amount offered and the type of plan established; potential problems if new employees do not meet their contractual obligations, thus causing the employing agency to seek redress; disadvantages agencies lacking financial resources to compete using signing bonuses

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Develop the objectives of a plan; seek support of the Human Resources entity and the political body (budgetary approval authority); determine the amount to be offered; develop qualifications for the bonus; determine the point at which the bonus should be paid (e.g., hire date, completion of the academy, FTO program or the probationary period).

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

Agencies should assess recruiting competition from neighboring agencies.

Experience/Resource Agencies

This is a relatively new concept; few agencies have attempted this technique.

Related Practices

See: Overall Benefits Package and other retention-related Best Practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will be directly related to the amount of money offered in signing bonuses and the number of employees hired; there will be administrative costs in managing the practice.

Bilingual Pay



Executive Summary

Bilingual pay programs are designed to enhance the ability of law enforcement to effectively communicate and interact with non-English-speaking people. This ability is increasingly crucial in California, the most diverse state in the country. This type of program encourages individuals with bilingual

skills to become peace officers by offering them higher pay. It also encourages current officers to learn a new language and receive extra compensation.

Objective

To encourage those who speak a second language to consider a law enforcement career and to invite current employees to learn a second language.

Strengths

Increases diversity among officers and deputies; improves agency's ability to communicate with a wide variety of people.

Weaknesses

Increased costs for bilingual pay; must establish qualification and testing criteria.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine need for program; identify potential costs for the program; decide applicable languages; set required level of fluency; establish testing process; determine and address meet-and-confer issues.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Some agencies may have a higher number of requests for the program and a wider variety of languages included.

Regional Considerations

Are similar incentive programs used in neighboring agencies or agencies that compete in the same recruiting market?

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies already offer bilingual pay incentive programs.

Related Practices

N/A

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs vary depending on the testing method used and whether the program is handled in-house or by an outside agency. Costs also depend on the level of fluency required and the number of officers who qualify.



Diversity of Work

Executive Summary

Assignment rotation can be valuable in providing opportunities for officers and deputies to experience a variety of specialty duties. This may be particularly important in smaller departments, where permanent specialty assignments limit movement and opportunity for all officers. Rotation of duties provides a wider range of training, experience, and skills, which is suitable to the generalist nature of policing found in some departments.

Marketers and researchers describe the generation currently entering the job market as seeking employment where they feel they are part of a team and have opportunity for personal and professional growth. They are also more likely to change careers frequently. Therefore, implementing the practice of rotational assignments may be an employment incentive for younger employees entering law enforcement.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To increase diversity of work assignments within law enforcement agencies.

Strengths

Increases opportunities for employees to experience specialized assignments; provides greater exposure to all areas of the organization; reflects planned development of employees; broadens knowledge about the agency among employees.

Weaknesses

Increases training cost and time required for developing experience; reduces institutional knowledge; may result in incidences of higher errors or mistakes due to increased turnover.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine the objectives and scope of the program; assess the timing for involving employee bargaining units in the process; identify potential problem areas; analyze the impact upon agency operations, budget and effectiveness; examine the potential impact on the community and the agency; determine assignments that will and/or will not be subject to rotation; develop the rotational period and timing.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller agencies may have only a few individuals in specialized assignments; agencies without specialized assignments would not consider this practice; may effect agency recruitment and retention.

Regional Considerations

May affect regional task force assignments.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Many agencies have identified assignments that are subject to rotation and others that are not subject to rotation; most regional task forces have policies delineating some level of rotation.

Related Practices

See: Career Ladders.

Associated Costs/Budget

Increased costs associated with training, loss of work time spent training new personnel, and managing the program

Alternative Work Schedules

Executive Summary

Because they often provide significant incentives to employees, alternative work schedules can be very beneficial in the recruitment and retention of law enforcement personnel. For example, an alternative work schedule can reduce commuting hours and the amount of time needed to prepare for work, resulting in an increase in personal time for each employee. However, to be successful, alternative work schedules must also meet the needs of the

community and the organization. Each agency must analyze its budget, personnel needs, deployment issues, organizational goals and objectives, and other related concerns. Many alternative work schedules are currently in effect throughout the state, and there is a wide body of information available for the purpose of research and analysis.

Objective

To assess the cost-benefit of instituting an alternative work schedule to enhance recruitment and retention.

Strengths

May reduce sick time absences and overtime; may assist cities and counties in achieving air quality improvement goals; may enhance opportunities for scheduling consistent training and other special deployment needs.

Weaknesses

Requires more employees and equipment; may increase the number of less productive overlap shifts; reduces the frequency and consistency of officer contact with the public in agencies emphasizing community policing; longer shift hours may be less desirable to some employees.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Perform a workload study which assesses service demands; assess present service response performance against other shift plans; assess the staffing costs of each alternative shift schedule; benchmark current overtime and sick time; obtain employee input regarding alternative schedules; seek community input; obtain funding; pilot test one or more of the alternatives and assess the impact.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Small departments may experience the most difficulty in funding increased staffing and obtaining additional equipment; unanticipated absences are more difficult to manage for small departments.

Regional Considerations

Employees may experience dissatisfaction with a shift schedule when other departments in the area have implemented an alternative schedule that provides for more time off.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Alternative work schedules are in use in many parts of the state. POST Command College papers and other law enforcement periodicals provide information on the variety and suitability of alternative shift schedules.

Related Practices

See: Diversity of Work and Job Sharing/Part Time Employment.

Associated Costs/Budget

There will be increased costs for additional staffing, benefits, equipment, and administrative support.



Job Sharing/Part Time Employment

Executive Summary

Introduction of job sharing or part-time employment plans allows flexibility in work schedules, therefore encouraging valued employees to pursue their interests while remaining in the field of law enforcement. Such plans may also be a powerful recruiting tool for those interested in spending time on personal, educational, or other opportunities not easily accommodated by full-time employment.

Part-time employees may allow an agency to enhance service delivery by using these employees to staff assignments not previously supported due to budget constraints. Part-time employees and job sharing employees may be used to allow full-time employees to concentrate on other priority activities.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To increase the flexibility of law enforcement positions by establishing job sharing and part-time employment programs

Strengths

Potential recruiting tool; may retain employees who would otherwise leave the profession; gives law enforcement a more family friendly image.

Weaknesses

Would require changes in civil service rules and agency policies; may require changes in employment contracts and benefit administration; may be difficult to manage scheduling.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Establish a work group to assess the planning requirements; determine legal or agency rules that may be obstacles; identify salary/benefit issues; develop strategies to identify suitable job share/part-time positions; formulate plan to include the agency's current assignment schedule; involve agency's employee representation unit.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Smaller departments may have scheduling limitations, limited numbers of officers, and lack of assignment flexibility. Larger agencies may have a greater degree of flexibility to accommodate the unique characteristics of such a program.

Regional Considerations

Regional issues are not significant, although some agencies would have to consider how to retain employees rather than losing them to other agencies with job share opportunities.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Agencies with existing part-time employment arrangements; other professions with job share/part-time options.

Related Practices

See: Employee Empowerment and Alternative Work Schedules.

Associated Costs/Budget

Increased administrative costs; increased training costs (each part-time officer must still meet POST training requirements); possible increased benefit costs.

Educational Incentives



Executive Summary

Educational incentives acknowledge the value law enforcement places on well- educated peace officers. The environment in which officers must perform their duties is highly complex, requiring assessing situations and making judgments that can have serious consequences. Since the early 1960's, there have been many Federal, state and local commissions convened to examine the law enforcement response to critical incidents. In nearly all of these commission reports, there has been reference to the need to increase the educational level of law enforcement officers.

Several studies there have shown that recruits who possess education beyond high school

perform better during the academy and in field training. Many of today's law enforcement executives achieved advanced degrees as they attained progressively higher levels of job responsibilities. Arguably, the combination of higher education and increased responsibility within the profession has been of value to their success.

In most instances today, law enforcement is struggling to attract college-educated employees. In order to reverse this trend, there may be value in considering educational incentives as a recruitment and retention strategy. Incentive programs may provide both immediate and long-term benefits.

Objective

To attract candidates to the law enforcement profession and to recognize the value of higher education among existing employees by developing educational incentives.

Strengths

Reflects a commitment by the agency to support employees who have pursued higher education; encourages employees to continue their education; can promote pursuing an advanced degree as integral to career development.

Weaknesses

Budget constraints may inhibit funding an incentive program; absence of an educational institution in close proximity to the agency may limit the scope of the program; may be labor-management issues that need to be addressed.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify the scope of the program; identify the target group(s) (e.g., entry-level candidates, tenured employees); assess whether statutory change is required; prepare staff report describing the objectives of the program and the proposed budget; submit the recommendation to agency's funding source.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Small agencies may consider regional or collaborative efforts for funding purposes.

Regional Considerations

Availability & proximity of educational institutions.

Experience/Resource Agencies

There are various types of programs offered by agencies; other program and funding opportunities may be available through colleges and universities.

Related Practices

See: Overall Benefits Package and Employee Empowerment.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs are contingent upon the scope of the program and the goals of the agency.

On-Site Dry Cleaning Services

Executive Summary

Retention of valued employees is a desire of everyone in law enforcement. Enhancing benefits may assist in this effort. The practice of providing a cleaning service at the workplace is a convenience and timesaver for agency-uniformed employees, and increases employee discretion in the use of time off. The service

reduces the time employees must spend in dropping off and picking up uniforms at the cleaners, and the agency benefits by assisting employees in maintaining a professional uniform appearance.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To provide convenience and time saving to employees by providing uniform dry cleaning pickup and delivery service at the work location.

Strengths

May improve morale and retention; a convenience that saves employee time both on and off the job.

Weaknesses

Possible costs associated with implementation (depending on service offered); may involve meet and confer issues if offered as an employee benefit.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify a dry-cleaning company that offers this service; enter into agreement with the company.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Number of employees that would use service.

Regional Considerations

May be able to share service agreement with other law enforcement or government agencies.

Experience/Resource Agencies

The Santa Rosa Police Department allows a cleaning service to pick up and drop-off cleaning inside the department. Billing is handled between the service provider and the employee.

Related Practices

See: Overall Benefits Package.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on service offered (pick up and drop off only vs. full service); probably minimal impact.

Establishing Sleeping Facilities



Executive Summary

The demands of law enforcement require employees to perform shift work, work longer hours due to compressed work schedules, attend court, and work overtime. Though this requirement is not new in police work, it has become a greater concern for employees and managers alike. Employees who work in major urban areas are more frequently finding it difficult to secure affordable housing in the communities in which they work. This often is reflected in officers living one or more hours of driving distance from work. As a result, pro-

viding sleeping facilities may result in significant benefits to the agency and its employees.

Availability of such facilities can increase morale, reduce fatigue and minimize frustration resulting from the effects of lengthy commutes. Several agencies in high cost areas have successfully established employee sleeping facility programs for personnel who commute long distances. Most of these agencies are located in densely populated metropolitan areas such as the San Francisco Bay area.

Objective

To provide sleeping facilities for law enforcement employees assigned to shift work.

Strengths

Addresses scheduling issues; eases commute; reduces fatigue and burnout; allows personnel to better respond to shift adjustments and extended work hours.

Weaknesses

Cost to establish and maintain facility; lack of suitable space; need to monitor facility; potential liability problems.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Locate suitable property for sleeping quarters; identify potential financial partnerships (i.e., public, private, business, labor organization); determine budget; address liability concerns; determine new scheduling needs.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Agency size and staffing needs will dictate the scale and type of facility.

Regional Considerations

Real estate and/or rental costs must be considered; high cost of living areas generally result in greater commuting distances for employees.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Several agencies have successfully established sleeping facility programs. Government procurement programs can assist in the acquisition of property and their furnishings.

Related Practices

See retention issues: Take Home Cars/Commute Incentives, and Relocation Assistance.

Associated Costs/Budget

Acquiring a facility is a significant cost; acquisition of furnishings and "soft" costs such as cleaning and maintenance should be assessed.

Employee Empowerment

Executive Summary

An employee empowerment program assumes a participative organization. It encourages employee input about decisions that impact the workplace. Designated employee group(s) meet consistently to work on specified issues, and their work and recommendations are shared with the rest of the organization. The objective of such a program is to address complex and/or controversial issues that are best resolved by employees and their leaders working together.

Often these issues involve matters related to terms and conditions of employment. This assumes participation of employees who may

be leaders within a recognized labor organization and provides opportunity for the agency to develop employees through training in negotiation and facilitation skills. Understanding the principles of interest-based negotiation will assist the group in thinking broadly and negotiating with the desire to promote positive solutions.

For the practice to be successful, it must be a forum for problem solving, not criticism of employees and the department. The work of the group is in no way intended to displace the "meet and confer" processes.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To allow employees to have a greater role in the day to day operations and problem solving efforts of the department.

Strengths

Helps align employee expectations with the goals of the department; keeps management apprised of employee satisfaction and productivity; recognizes employees as stakeholders of the department; supports concepts and principles of community or neighborhood policing; improves employee understanding of departmental policy, rules, and procedures.

Weaknesses

Can lead to misunderstanding; requires additional time to work through employee processes; lack of specific guidelines may cause a breakdown in communication; may result in duplicated efforts; requires critical "Risk Assessment" by managers and supervisors; the department head may reject the recommendation developed by the employee group(s).

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Assess the organization's mission, vision and values; identify a representative group (e.g., labor, executive, shift representatives) and charge them with the planning responsibility; select members to participate; identify the purpose of the group and define parameters;

identify the forum (i.e., focus groups, team meetings); set the agenda for the meetings; identify the means of reporting the results and providing feedback.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Based on organizational structure, representatives of a cross section of the department should participate. Department size may require limiting the number of participants, rotating group membership or using subject-specific standing groups.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Sacramento Police Department – Issues and Answers Committee

Related Practices

See: retention-related best practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Minimal, usually time spent at meetings and making contact with resource personnel.

Take Home Cars/Commute Incentives



Executive Summary

Take home vehicle programs have been used in various parts of the country. The primary benefits of these programs include the following: officers take better care of vehicles assigned to them; conspicuously marked vehicles used on and off duty provide a greater law enforcement presence; costs moderate over time following the higher initial cost of implementing this type of program.

Employees working in high cost of living areas of the state frequently cannot afford housing in the city or county of employment. For this rea-

son, some cities and a few counties provide commuter incentives. These may include mileage reimbursement, parking reimbursement and free or discounted mass transit. Some cities and counties have provided pool vehicles or vanpools for employees who can share transportation to work from their areas of residence. In some vanpools, employees may pay only their share of the gasoline. The public agency leases or purchases the vehicles and maintenance is also provided by the agency.

Objective

To provide a take home vehicle and/or commuter reimbursement program.

Strengths

May help attract or help retain employees; cost effective long term; makes public feel safer; reduces downtime between shifts.

Weaknesses

Increased initial cost due to vehicle purchase(s), commuter incentives; requires administrative accountability procedures.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Determine how many additional vehicles are needed; determine appropriate commuter reimbursement; conduct cost analysis; seek support from governing authority; enter into contracts with a public entity or other agency; track impact of program.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Large departments may have more difficulty funding take home vehicles for all officers or finding adequate parking.

Regional Considerations

Agencies in rural areas may reduce initial cost of vehicles by developing a regional purchasing authority.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Vallejo PD and other agencies currently provide such incentives.

Related Practices

See: Overall Benefits Package.

Associated Costs/Budget

Varies depending on scope of program. Initial cost increases will be incurred; over time savings may be realized through better car maintenance and employee retention.

Childcare Programs

Executive Summary

Childcare is a significant concern for most employees. It may be as important to them as the public safety work they perform. Law enforcement agencies nationwide are increasingly concerned with impediments that prevent qualified individuals interested in a law enforcement career from entering the workforce. It is equally important to recognize that childcare issues for incumbent law enforcement officers present serious challenges to the traditional day care concept. The law enforcement officer has many demands upon his or her time, which often means that most daytime childcare providers cannot meet the needs of such a non-traditional schedule.

Establishing a childcare program is costly. However, the savings that are seen from such a program include reduced sick time (needed to

care for a child), less tardiness, fewer distractions at work, and improved employee satisfaction. The practice of officer parents intentionally working different shifts to minimize the time when childcare is required may be reduced. These benefits have the potential for improving the agency's return on its investment and may significantly offset the expense.

Agencies can create partnerships with public and private entities to obtain resources that will assist the implementation of a work-related childcare program. Establishing a childcare program is likely to build stronger relationships within the local community and enhance a department's image. In addition, the demonstrated commitment of the agency toward its employees will increase satisfaction and improve recruitment and retention.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To enhance recruitment and retention of applicants by establishing childcare programs.

Strengths

Decreases absenteeism and increases productivity; employees experience less distraction knowing their children are cared for and easily accessible; onsite facilities can reduce tardiness and job turnover; enhances agencies' public image and humanizes the profession.

Weaknesses

Operating a childcare facility is costly; establishing partnerships to address funding needs, sharing expenses, or finding a facility are difficult; there are licensing, liability and legal concerns to be addressed.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Identify employee needs regarding childcare; form a planning committee to develop the requirements of the program; develop a budget; determine funding source(s) for the program, staffing needs, facility requirements, and legal requirements; determine the most appropriate entity to operate the facility.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

All departments may consider pooling resources or establishing joint programs.

Regional Considerations

Cost of establishing childcare centers will likely be higher in urban areas where costs related to facilities, wages, and operating expenses are higher.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Other State, County, and municipal agencies with current childcare programs (Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Transportation, City of Sunnyvale, City of Walnut Creek).

Related Practices

See: Overall Benefits Package.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the approach chosen. Corporate donations, grants, and community discounts may lower costs. Partnerships may also reduce costs.

Career Ladders



Executive Summary

Addressing recruitment and retention issues should include a strategy for providing career development opportunities. Development of a mentoring strategy is invaluable in addressing employee feelings of "inclusion" in their agency. Employees who do not feel part of the team often cite this perception as a primary reason for withdrawing from the organization or leaving a department. The presence of a mentoring program during the probationary period can provide the kind of support needed to help an employee succeed.

The development of a career ladder program for existing employees could involve mentoring in areas such as: understanding the vagaries of the promotional process, identify-

ing and making career path decisions, attaining a specialized assignment, and recognizing ways to develop technical experience to elevate expertise.

The cost of hiring employees to replace those who leave prematurely can be a significant drain on department resources. This is evident from the agency's lost investment in selection and training costs. Regardless of its form, research indicates that mentoring and developing employees provides enhanced assimilation into an organization, fosters positive interpersonal relationships, facilitates professional growth, and promotes organizational cohesiveness.

Objective

To improve employee professional development.

Strengths

Provides incentives for recruiting and retaining employees; enhances assimilation; creates goal oriented employees; fosters positive internal relationships; transfers institutional knowledge and experience; both employees and the organization benefit from positive program outcomes.

Weaknesses

Diminishes employee perception of the department when there is a lack of organizational commitment; improper pairing of mentors/protégés; limited opportunities; frustration when the objectives of the program are not adequately described.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Assess organizational opportunities that may be viable for developing employees; review existing programs; research retention issues; form a mentor group and assign a coordinator; assign mentors as appropriate; follow-up by evaluating the impact of the program.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Large departments have increased opportunities for mentoring employees; however, small agencies may have success where the chief of police is the primary mentor.

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

IACP (International Association of Chiefs of Police) training classes; CHP program; Lansing Michigan Program (article in March 2000 FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin).

Related Practices

See: retention-related best practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Minimal; some additional costs in training, providing developmental publication materials, and employee time during mentoring activity.

Reciprocity of Retirement Systems

Executive Summary

Today's officers are less likely to remain in one agency for their entire careers and are more likely to move between agencies easily and without penalty. Agencies that do not allow employees to transfer their pension plans prior to retirement age may find that newer employees leave earlier in their career to avoid

losing pension contributions. Pension reciprocity may lessen the risk that experienced officers will be lost or that the agency will be unable to recruit quality candidates.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To allow peace officers to transfer between California law enforcement agencies without losing pension benefits.

Strengths

Enhances recruitment; allows officers to more easily move from agency to agency; eliminates penalties for moving to another agency.

Weaknesses

May impact retention by making it easier to change employment to another agency; requires significant charter and legislative changes; requires significant cooperation among agencies.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Research charter and pension language to determine how reciprocity could be accomplished; determine interest; decide which agencies to include.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

Consult with the California Public Employee Retirement System (CALPERS) as well as individuals with pension plan knowledge and experience in enacting or changing legislation.

Related Practices

See: Overall Benefits Package.

Associated Costs/Budget

Cost for staff conducting research; potential costs for changing pension systems or plans.

Physical Fitness Programs



Executive Summary

As a recruiting tool, a comprehensive physical fitness program conducted on duty is invaluable because it displays a progressive attitude and reflects organizational commitment to employees. The benefits of physical fitness are well documented: employee morale and productivity improve; stress is reduced; and gen-

eral fitness levels increase. Additionally, a formalized program can provide employees with general wellness guidance, nutritional advice, and increased awareness of lifestyle habits.

Objective

To establish a departmental health and fitness program for peace officers.

Strengths

Develops more physically fit officers; shows commitment to the well being of employees; increases employee retention; reduces job-related injuries; increases morale; reduces stress.

Weaknesses

Potential risk of injury/liability; department may lack facilities; on-duty workout time can be compromised by shift activity; may be cost prohibitive for some agencies.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Research existing programs; identify program goal; determine level of agency commitment to funding, scheduling, and philosophy; appoint a coordinator; identify location; acquire equipment; determine scheduling.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

Larger agencies may have more resources (e.g., professional fitness mentoring, compensated workout time, appropriate location, and associated equipment) and their increased staffing levels would provide more flexibility in scheduling on-duty workout times. Smaller agencies may consider off-duty workouts and corporate memberships at local health clubs.

Regional Considerations

Geographic location; suitability of surrounding areas; availability of fitness facilities.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Fremont Police Department; Salinas Police Department; Santa Ana Police Department.

Related Practices

See other retention-related best practices.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will vary depending on the extent and complexity of the department's fitness and wellness program.

Recognition and Rewards

Executive Summary

Recognizing and rewarding excellent performance is a highly desirable trait for all successful organizations. It is very important for any agency to recognize outstanding effort on the part of its employees and to reward such achievements. This is a critical element of any effort to retain employees long-term, to improve organizational performance, to obtain high morale, and to develop an effective working relationship with the community.

Recognition and rewards may vary from something as simple as verbal recognition of excel-

lent work to a community-wide awards banquet formally recognizing achievement or meritorious behavior. Written recognition, performance-based evaluations, employee-of-the-month programs, and ceremonies recognizing courage or integrity are other ways departments reward superior performance by law enforcement officers.

AT A GLANCE

Objective

To develop a recognition and rewards program to help foster an encouraging and positive work environment.

Strengths

Improves agency morale; increases the motivation to perform professionally in the service delivered to the community.

Weaknesses

Must be well maintained and include a process of participation and nomination for individual and team efforts.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Research similar programs and tailor the design to the specific agency goals and objectives. This should include approval and endorsements from the executive staff.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

N/A

Regional Considerations

N/A

Experience/Resource Agencies

There is a wealth of recognition and rewards programs from law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Check with other agencies for ideas to enhance your own and identify missing themes.

Related Practices

See: Employee Empowerment and Forming Retention Task Forces

Associated Costs/Budget

Associated costs vary depending upon the reward. These may include additional annual leave, plaques, vacations, uniforms, equipment gift certificates, etc. Many agencies host annual or quarterly dinners for employees.

Forming Retention Task Forces

Executive Summary

The recruitment, selection and retention of law enforcement personnel are of paramount concern in the public service arena. Not only is the need to identify and attract the most highly qualified individuals a growing challenge, but retaining quality individuals is becoming more and more difficult. The formation of a task force or organizational committee to identify, assess and prioritize issues in the agency can be a significant benefit to the retention efforts.

A retention task force will effectively address working conditions and organizational issues

that have an effect on morale and/or tend to contribute to employees leaving the agency. In addition, addressing the differences in tenure, work experience, family considerations and personal interests of individuals within an agency will demonstrate a sincere interest on the part of management to improving working conditions and job satisfaction.

Objective

To create a task force to assess and identify working conditions for the purpose of improving agency retention.

Strengths

Improves working conditions; increases morale and retention.

Weaknesses

Time and effort expended toward committee contributions; schedule adjustments or overtime could be an issue.

Start-up Issues/Steps to Initiate the Program

Consider the personnel assigned and insure that they include an effective representation of a cross section of the organization or agency and are skilled at staff work and planning.

Variables/Alterations for Department Size

The size of an agency should be in direct correlation to the make up of the task force. A large agency may divide the task force into smaller groups representing units or divisions. Smaller agencies would probably be represented in a single group.

Regional Considerations

This best practice is best suited for local implementation.

Experience/Resource Agencies

Los Angeles Police Department, Mountain View Police Department, Fremont Police Department, Santa Rosa Police Department.

Related Practices

See: Developing a Recruitment Team and General Budgetary Considerations.

Associated Costs/Budget

Costs will be minimal, but will vary depending on the extent of commitment to the committee work and effort expended.